

A YEAR WITH THE GAEKWAR OF BARODA



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**A YEAR WITH
THE GAEKWAR OF BARODA**

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Your sincere Friend
Seyen Rao Gaekwar.

A YEAR WITH THE GAEKWAR OF BARODA

BY THE
REV. EDWARD ST. CLAIR WEEDEN

OF NEW COLLEGE, OXFORD, M.A.
SOMETIME MINOR CANON OF CHESTER CATHEDRAL
AND VICAR OF CANON-FFROME

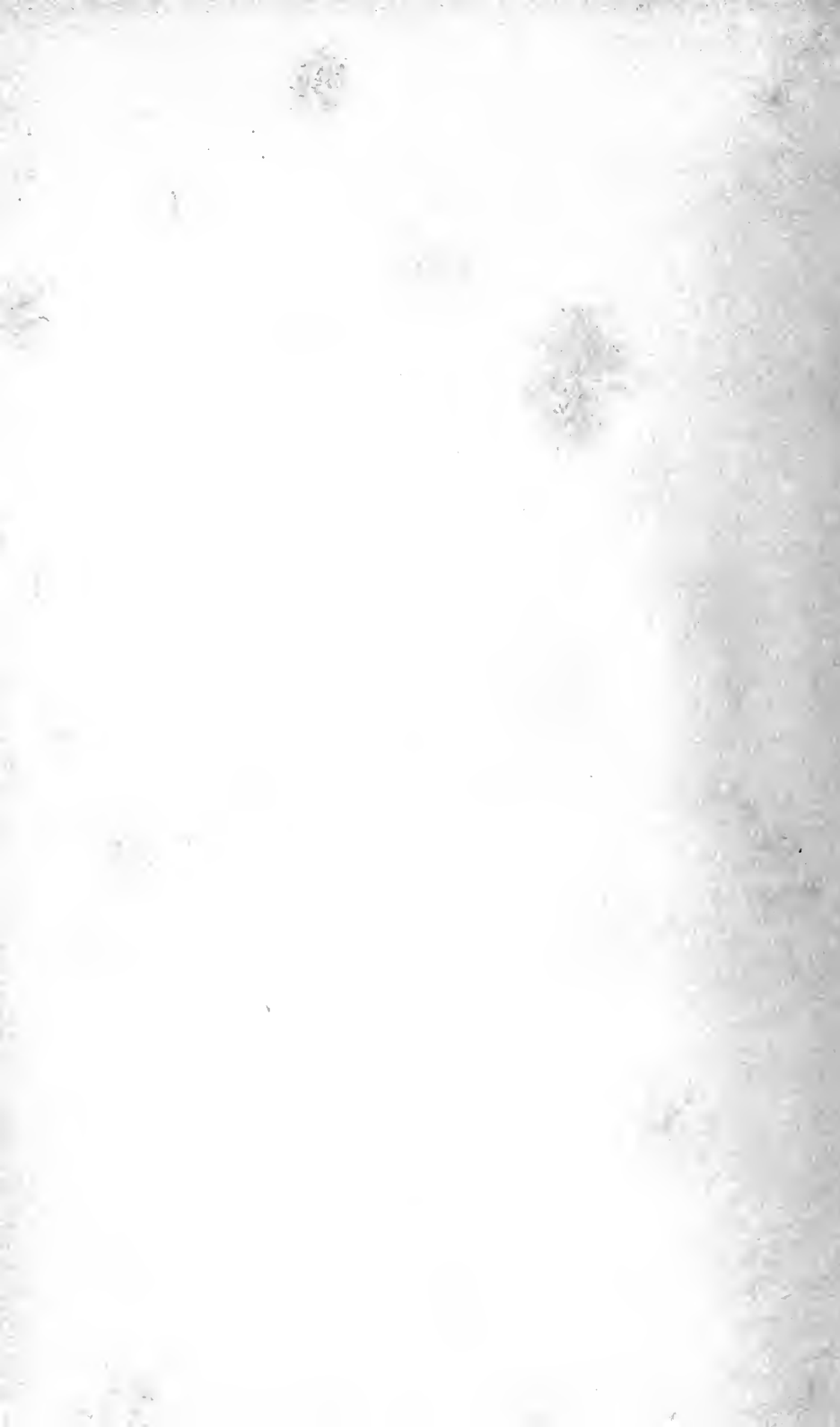
*With 25 Illustrations from Photographs
Including a Photogravure Frontispiece*

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TO HER HIGHNESS
THE MAHARANI SCINDHIA OF GWALIOR
(PRINCESS INDIRA GAEKWAR)
A WEDDING GIFT
FROM THE MOST DEVOTED OF HER SUBJECTS

2045653



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A WORD OF APOLOGY

It may seem almost unnecessary to try to palm off yet another book of India upon the public, and my only claim to a hearing is that I have seen India with the eyes of the man in the street and have enjoyed the experience so much that I think he may perhaps like to see her through mine.

At least he will have one advantage which is not given to everybody: he will see her as the guest of the Maharaja Gaekwar of Baroda, G.C.S.I., one of the three Premier Princes of India, with a salute of twenty-one guns, the ruler of two millions of men, reputed to possess the finest collection of jewels in the world and to have a fabulous revenue at his disposal. As he ought to be able to recognize his host when he sees him, I must begin by giving as good a description of him as I can.

His Highness, who is now forty-eight years of age, is rather below the middle height and inclined to stoutness. His short black hair is very slightly tinged with grey on the temples, and except for his closely-trimmed moustache he is clean-shaven. He has the intelligent look of the clever, well-educated man, and the indefinable expression of one who is accustomed to be obeyed. His countenance is eminently pleasing

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without being strikingly handsome, and shows great determination, frankness and amiability. His hands and feet are small and shapely, and he has a very clear and pleasant voice. His manners are perfect, gracious, easy and self-possessed. He is always beautifully dressed and groomed, and has the healthy complexion bestowed by temperate habits and regular exercise. He talks rapidly and well, with graceful gestures, and has a charming smile and an irresistible laugh.

His character in no way falls short of the favourable impression produced by his personal appearance. Kind, generous and just, he is one of the wisest, ablest and most enlightened rulers that India has yet seen.

If it is hard for me to do justice to the striking personality of the Maharaja, it is impossible for me to give any adequate impression of Her Highness the Maharani. This most beautiful and charming lady, a daughter of one of the most ancient royal houses of India, commands the admiration and devotion of all who are happy enough to know her.

The Maharaja is indeed fortunate in having such a consort: an admirable wife, a wise and discreet counsellor, a devoted mother to her three fine sons and to the daughter in whom she lives again, a perfect hostess, a true and loyal friend.

For nearly twenty years I have enjoyed the intimate friendship of the Maharaja, and have



Photo by

THE GAEKWAR AT CANON-FFRAME.

[Colonel Hopton.

A WORD OF APOLOGY

travelled with him through most of the countries of Europe. His Highness has also honoured me with short visits at Chester and at Canon-ffrome. For a long time I was unable to accept the many kind invitations he gave me to stay with him in Baroda. At last a favourable opportunity came, and early in October, 190- I sailed on the *Macedonia*, one of the largest vessels in the P. and O. fleet, to spend a year with the Gaekwar.

It remains to be seen whether my impressions of India will be of interest to others; for me they remain a gorgeous vision which will brighten many a dark day.

The following pages are compiled from letters sent by the mail to my mother every week, but for convenience sake they are here arranged according to the month. The Maharaja has been in England this year for the Coronation, with Her Highness, and the announcement of Princess Indira's engagement to the Maharaja Scindhia of Gwalior has given great pleasure to all their friends, many of whom will be interested by an account of their daily life in India. I need hardly say how much obliged I am to His Highness for allowing me to publish it. As a rule he prefers to avoid the public gaze, but he understands how anxious I am to put on record the gratitude which I feel to them all for their extraordinary kindness to a humble individual like myself; and he has bidden me to speak out freely without fear of giving

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offence, and to give him the chance of seeing himself as others see him. And yet I know only too well that, though I am sure to be accused of drawing too flattering a portrait, it will still fall far short of what it ought to be.

Like a small boy in the cricket field who calls out "Trial!" when he faces the bowler, I must commend my first book to the tender mercies of the critics and beg them not to send my bails flying with their first ball. Apart from the spelling, which was never my strong point, my pages are sure to be crammed with "accuracies" (as the Librarian at Baroda would say).

If men who have spent a lifetime in India confess that they have failed to penetrate into the inner thought and feeling of the people, it is not likely that I should have succeeded in so doing; and as I have no knowledge of the language, all my observations must necessarily have been of the most superficial kind. At the same time, my opportunities for studying the native life have been such as are given to but few Englishmen in India, although I had so little time to make use of them; and it is just possible that I may be able to contribute something fresh to a wide and interesting subject.

It is much to have spent twelve months in a country and to leave it with a strong feeling of affection, I might almost say of devotion, towards its inhabitants. There are, no doubt, objectionable people in India as there are everywhere, but I have

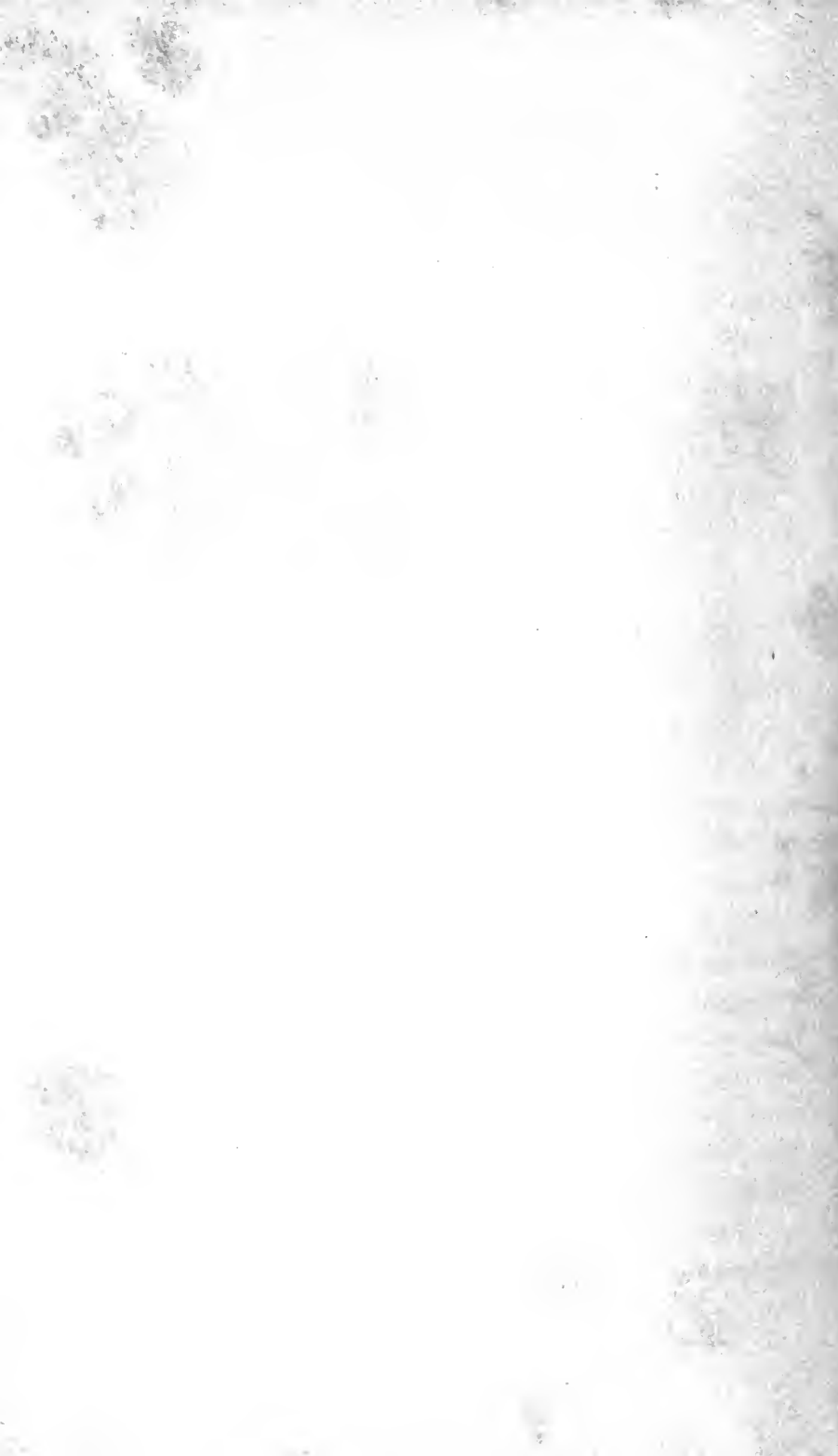
A WORD OF APOLOGY

come across very few of them. The native, even when he is exasperating, is always amusing; and as a general rule I have found him kind, courteous, hospitable as far as his mode of life allows, and as considerate as may be when you take his leisurely, easy-going disposition into account. His ways are not our ways, and never will be; but he is none the less a good fellow, and I make him my bow, and shake him by the hand, and hope that I may some day have the pleasure of meeting him again.

Lewes,

Feast of St. Michael and All Angels.

1911.



A YEAR WITH THE GAEKWAR OF BARODA

OCTOBER

*Lakshmivilas Palace,
Baroda.*

THE chief impression which India has made upon me during this first week is one of unreality ; it all seems too good to be true ; there is something in the atmosphere which helps this delusion. In England one feels it perhaps once in five years, and then the sky becomes cloudy, or something tiresome happens, and the reality of life is brought home to one. But here there is nothing to mar the effect of living in fairyland : I have felt nothing like it since the evening many years ago when the curtain went up at my first pantomime. Here there are no clouds, no rain, no worries, only one splendid blaze of beauty, one magnificent feast of colour from morning till night.

The nights are as beautiful as the days, and it seems quite a waste of time to go to bed ; and then

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when one wakes in the morning there steals across the mind a peaceful thrill of perfect happiness at the thought of what the day has in store.

Already the days on the *Macedonia* seem far away in the past; after a delightful voyage, during which I made many charming friends, we woke one glorious morning to find ourselves lying off Bombay. I hastened on deck, and found that we were in a beautiful bay, enclosed on two sides by numerous islands, with the lofty towers of the city glittering before us and high hills rising in the background.

A clerk from Cook's office came up with a letter from the Maharaja asking me to go on to Baroda by the night mail, as we should have many opportunities of seeing Bombay together later on. The clerk took charge of my luggage, and we were soon driving through streets thronged with people dressed in the most brilliant costumes, to the Taj Mahal hotel, a large, cool building where baths and breakfast awaited us.

I did not attempt any sight-seeing, but spent the day in driving up and down the broad, handsome street with tramways running down it where the principal shops are, in which I soon bought all the clothes I am likely to want.

We had tea at the Yacht Club on a long breezy terrace overlooking the bay, crowded with smartly-dressed women with their attendant swains, and then went for a stroll on the Apollo Bandar, or landing-

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place, where the natives congregate in the evening in their carriages.

Most of the wealthy merchants of India are Parsis, who have large houses in Bombay and live so far as they can in English style.

After a cheery dinner at the hotel, a few faithful friends drove with me to the station, where we were met by Cook's men, who had brought my luggage and reserved a large compartment for me, and with hearty farewells to my comrades I was soon steaming away into the starlit night through the suburbs of Bombay and over the creaking bridges that join it to the mainland, for the city itself is built on an island.

A comfortable bed was spread on one of the broad seats, and I made my preparations for the night; but at first I was in no mood to sleep: I had some delicious fruit, iced drinks and a box of excellent Indian cigars at my elbow, and all around me lay India, the day-dream of my life realized at last, with its vast jungles, through which elephants and tigers might be roaming and which were sure to be pretty full of snakes. At length the fatigues of the day began to make themselves felt, and I sank into oblivion until the Eurasian guard came to tell me that it was five o'clock and that Baroda was our next stop. I had just finished dressing when we got there, and Sampatrao, the Maharaja's brother, whom I had met in England, came rushing in to welcome me, and carried me off through rows of bowing

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station officials to an open carriage with a pair of splendid horses which was waiting for us.

The day was just dawning as we drove along a broad road planted with large, shady trees, and Sampatrao, chatting gaily, kept waving his hand towards shadowy buildings which he named as we passed them, the College, the Hospital, the Entrance to the Public Park, the Military Hospital.

Then we crossed a handsome stone bridge over a broad, deep river, and turned through a gateway into the winding drives of a park: and suddenly, as the bugles were heralding the rising sun, there rose before us the domes and pinnacles and the graceful tower soaring heavenwards of the beautiful Palace in which I am now living.

Passing through a large hall we entered a lift and were taken up to the second floor, where Sampatrao showed me my rooms, a magnificent suite, drawing-room, study, bedroom, bathroom and dressing-room, opening on one side on to a broad corridor which forms one side of one of the great courtyards of the Palace, filled with tall palm-trees and fountains, and on the other through archways of delicate trellis-work on to an equally broad verandah overlooking the park.

Sampatrao clapped his hands, and a venerable, white-bearded butler presently appeared, followed by two bare-footed, turbaned servants, bearing a fragrant *chota hazri*, or "little breakfast" of tea, savoury





PALACE COMPOUND.

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omelette, fruit, etc., which they placed on a table on the verandah.

Oh! how delicious it was! I have never enjoyed a meal so much, sitting on that cool, shady terrace with the splendid gardens of the Palace spread out before us. Far beneath our feet a host of dark-skinned, thin-legged men were busy jerking streams of water from leathern skins which hung from their shoulders over the wide gravel drives, separated from one another by a green belt of grass, from which rose graceful palms and groups of statuary. Then a broad terrace with marble balustrade, beyond which fountains were playing into three great basins of water set in the midst of a large, sunk garden blazing with flowers. Swans, white and black, swam slowly about in the water, or went through a leisurely morning toilet on the platform of the gaily painted floating house in which they live, and a troop of monkeys played about among the trees. Beyond the garden a double avenue of fine trees extended for about a mile to an old Hindu temple on the bank of the river, and beyond this again tree-tops innumerable as far as the eye could reach. In fact the whole country looks like a great park.

Sampatrao then suggested that I might like to have my bath and departed, leaving me to the care of three servants, none of whom spoke a word of English, who were standing helplessly about among my baggage, evidently quite bewildered and rather

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frightened. They were extremely anxious to do something, but had not the faintest idea what to do.

At last I got my things unpacked and stowed away somehow, and was soon lying in a lovely great marble bath of warm water, into which about half a bottle of eau-de-Cologne had been sprinkled. Really I need have brought next to nothing with me: everything you could think of has been provided and on the most lavish scale, sponges, hair-brushes, scents, tooth-powders, hair-washes: my dressing-room is more like Truefitt's shop than anything else. Then I managed to dress with some difficulty, as they would not let me do a thing for myself, and yet had no notion how to do it themselves.

At last in a happy moment I made them understand by signs that I wished to be shaved, and in a few minutes a very dignified, handsome little person appeared with a complete barber's outfit. He spoke English very well indeed, and we had a long conversation as he shaved me very slowly, putting the lather upon about a square inch of my face at a time and then shaving it off.

It seems that the Maharaja's barber was ill and Sanka was taking his place for a few days; after that he was going to be my servant; on that point he had quite made up his mind. "You see, Sahib, there is no help. These other men they speak no English, and you speak no Hindustani. I have been in General Evans-Gordon's house for twelve or fourteen

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months, and have learnt the butler's work, the valet's work, all kinds of work. So when Laxman comes back to the Maharaja Sahib then I will come to your Honour. No English Sahib has ever stayed in the palace before, but his Highness wishes to show your Honour great respect and so he invites you to stay in his palace. These other men are all very good servants; but when you tell them, 'Do this, do that,' they cannot do it, because they do not understand. But in five or three days I will be always with your Honour and be your faithful servant, and then you will be very happy. And if you will be so kind and tell me of my faults, then perhaps His Highness will take me with him when he next goes to England; and I want very much to see England."

Sanka then sprinkled me in the most professional manner with various essences, brushed my hair and helped me to finish dressing, and then, telling me that the Maharaja was still sleeping after a disturbed night, departed bowing and smiling.

I then made the tour of my rooms, which are beautifully furnished in the English way, with a Bechstein piano and heaps of books and magazines, the only difference being that there are no windows and no doors. Heavy cocoanut mats called "tattis" are hung over the arches of the verandah, which are lowered and sprinkled with water when it grows hot, and the doorways are hung with silken curtains. Taking a newspaper, I lay back in a comfortable easy-

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chair and was soon fast asleep, with an electric fan humming softly behind me.

When I woke there was the Maharaja standing by my side looking down upon me with his pleasant smile. You may imagine how quickly I jumped up, and how delighted I was to see him again. He was looking awfully well and jolly and not a day older than when I last saw him. Except for his turban he was dressed all in white, the under garments being very soft and fine and covered with an *agniakara*, a long tunic, double-breasted and fastened at the side with strings, with a curious pattern upon it which is made by pressing it with shells. The trousers, or Jhodpore breeches, as they are called, fit tightly round the calf and are very baggy above the knee. His turban, or *puggari*, to give it its proper name, is made of thin cords, twisted tightly together by a cunning workman, and ending in a strip of cloth of gold which is brought over at the end to form the crown. It is of the dull brick-red which is the royal colour, and has a curious little peak behind which is peculiar to the Gaekwar family. He was wearing socks and red Oriental slippers.

He looked through my rooms with great interest and suggested one or two slight improvements, and at eleven o'clock we went down together to the dining-room to breakfast. Here we found Vaniker and dear little Doctor Jadhav, beaming with joy to see me again, and I was introduced to the Maharaja's uncle,

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Owchitrao Kaka and to a cousin of the Maharani, who speaks no English—almost the only person here who does not. The A.D.C. in waiting, Captain Nimbalker, also lunched with us, a most agreeable person.

The meal was a long one, as His Highness wanted to hear all about my voyage and told me not to hurry myself. When it was over we adjourned to the billiard-room and had a game, and at one o'clock a message came from the Maharani that she would receive me in her apartments.

My heart went pit-a-pat as I followed my guide down the long corridor; at the end of it was an archway concealed by a wooden screen upon which he tapped. An old woman appeared, who grinned with delight when she saw the "Master Sahib," as the servants used to call me in England, and beckoned me to follow her. Another passage brought us to a balcony running round a courtyard filled with tall palms and fountains, and there, leaning against the balustrade, stood my beautiful and gracious Maharani, whose clear dark eyes shone with pleasure as she came slowly towards me with graceful, swaying steps holding out both hands in welcome.

The Maharani is of middle height, but carries her head so proudly and yet so gracefully that she appears taller than she really is. Her carefully kept and abundant hair is hidden by a *sari* of white silk shot with gold, which falls over the perfect outline of her exquisite figure and is gathered between the knees,

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showing the ankles encircled with pearls and the small bare feet, which are as beautifully kept as her hands. She has two features which distinguish her beyond all other women : her magnificent teeth, revealed within the firm mouth by her rare and charming smile, and her arms, which are the most comely in the world. It was not till I had been with her for some time that I noticed the collar of emeralds as large as pigeons' eggs round her neck, and the chain of priceless pearls that falls from her shoulders to the waist.

After the first few words of welcome she led the way to her drawing-room, a large, lofty room overlooking the park, furnished with the exquisite taste which makes the most valuable objects look simple and homely. The chairs, the tables, the china behind the glass doors of the cupboards, the pictures, the statuettes and vases, the whole decoration of this delightful room was so absolutely in harmony with the Maharani herself that one forgot for the moment to wonder at the perfect taste which had laid all Europe and the artistic knowledge of a hundred friends under contribution to create these pleasing surroundings in the heart of an Eastern principality.

She began at once to talk about the subject nearest to her heart, her children. Princess Indira was upstairs, suffering from a slight attack of fever, but I should see her at the earliest possible moment. Jaisinhrao the eldest boy, is in America, taking his degree at Harvard, and she is looking forward to having him

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home during the long vacation. Shivajirao is in Bombay for one of the University examinations, and will be home again next week. Dharyashilrao, the youngest boy, is at school at Eastbourne, and finds the Sundays very dull.

When I asked if I should ever see her again during my visit, she laughed very much and said: "That depends upon yourself, for I shall always be pleased to see you whenever you like to come. As soon as Indira is better we shall dine with you almost every night. This *purdah* system is very absurd; but popular opinion is in favour of it, and so one has to reckon with it and avoid offending other people as far as possible. So many of the officers of the Court are relatives or connections of the Maharaja or of myself that there is very little difficulty, and the servants who wait at the table when I am there are carefully chosen and do not speak Mahratti, so that we can talk among ourselves *sans gêne*. You must try to learn to speak it; but it is not an easy language."

She also told me that she has several very intimate friends among the English people in the Camp, but not many, as they are constantly changing, and she dislikes the feeling that people may come to see her merely out of curiosity as a sort of spectacle. "Though indeed," she added with a smile, "I might have got used to that in America, for there they made a regular peep-show of us. But in America one must do what the Americans do; there would be no peace

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otherwise ; and when you have caught the humour of the situation it is quite amusing."

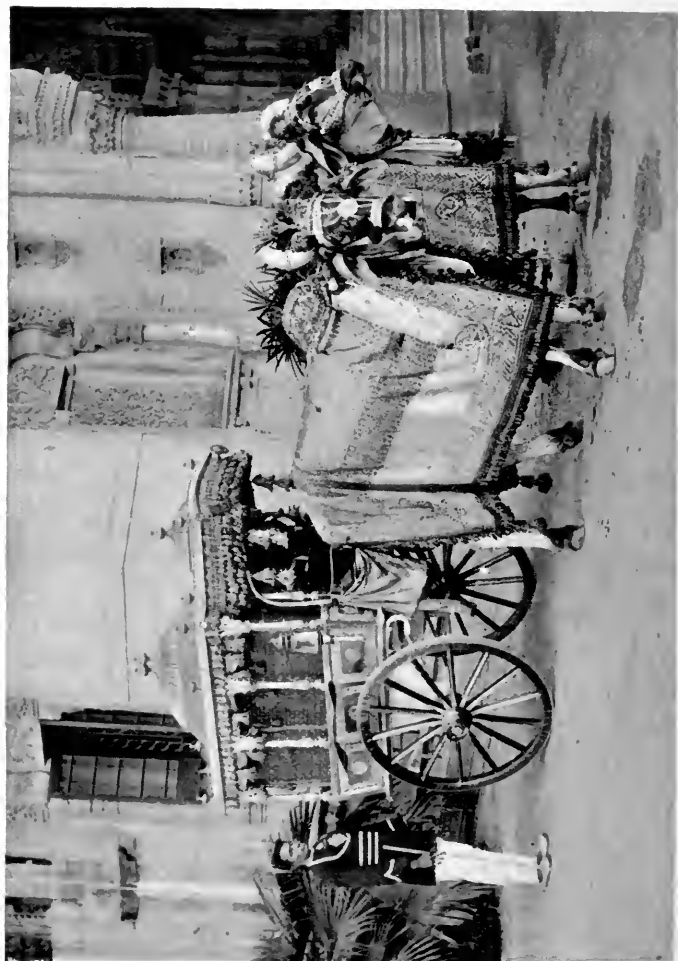
She then told me about their visit to the States and sent a servant for an album of newspaper cuttings, in which she showed me several comical pictures, among them one of her own foot.

You would be surprised to hear how fluently she talks, using the most perfect English with the greatest ease ; much better, indeed, than I do myself, for my conversation is rather slovenly, especially when I am at all nervous or excited.

The time had passed so quickly that I was surprised to hear it strike three, and got up to go, but Her Highness said that she would give me some tea first, and clapped her hands for a servant to ask the Maharaja if he could come.

✓ In India there are no bells ; you just clap your hands lightly and someone appears, like the Spirit of the Lamp. The servants are wonderfully patient, and sit for hours outside your room chatting quietly to one another or reading, generally some little English "Reading without Tears" kind of book, as they are all fearfully keen to be taken to England some day. At first they all tried to get out of it, but now they are wild to go.

The Maharani then opened the lid of a fine Blüthner grand piano and asked me to play to her, so I gave her a little selection from *Iolanthe* and sang her a song which I had written about the officers on the *Macedonia*, which she liked very much.



SILVER BULLOCK CART.

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When tea was brought she made it herself and it was most delicious. With the tea came His Highness in a white flannel suit; he had been working with his secretaries all the afternoon and was looking forward to a game of tennis, so as soon as we had finished Her Highness packed me off, saying that she was expecting some visitors, old-fashioned ladies who would be horrified if they found me there.

When I had changed I joined His Highness in the hall and we walked together down the shady avenues of the park to the tennis-courts. On the way we saw three little carriages approaching, like biscuit-boxes on wheels, each drawn by two milk-white bullocks, meandering slowly along, with curtains closely drawn, behind which, no doubt, the "old-fashioned ladies" were sitting.

Sampatrao and Nimbalker were waiting for us at the courts, and we played five sets with great energy. The courts are made of asphalt and play very fast, the nets, balls and racquets being all of the best and latest English make. The ground is enclosed by a high wire netting, and ten boys in green and gold uniforms, with bare legs, field the balls, so the game goes merrily on with the least possible delay.

When we were tired we found a table spread under the trees with lemon-squash and other cooling drinks and cigarettes, of which I was very glad, as I had never been so hot before.

In this dry climate there is little danger of

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catching cold, but His Highness is not going to let me run any risks, and made me go to a small pavilion close at hand and change into the warmer clothing which my servants had brought down.

The Maharaja's motor-car had meanwhile come up, and we went for a drive, first going slowly round the palace "compound," as the beautiful park is called. The riding-track by which it is bounded is about four miles long, and it has been planted and laid out in beautiful walks and drives by an expert hand. We passed first by the handsome building which was erected as a school for the Maharaja himself when he was a boy, and which has since been used for the education of his children. Part of it is the home of the fine library of ancient and modern books on every subject which His Highness has collected; and the large central hall is now used for luncheon parties on days when there is a cricket match.

The cricket-ground is just in front of it, and is said to be the best in India; the turf is absolutely level, and is sown with the finest grass-seed, which is carefully watered and rolled every day. A broad circular drive forms the boundary, an idea which was suggested by Fenner's Piece at Cambridge; and beyond this are groups of noble trees, under which many hundreds of spectators can watch the progress of the match.

Passing by the racquet-court and fives-courts, we entered the Maharani's garden, which is under her

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special care ; it extends over about ten acres, and is planted with orange-trees, mangoes and every kind of fruit that can be grown in India. Leaving this, the drive passes by the lodge gates which lead to the Gaekwar's private railway station on the Bombay and Baroda main line, which is also the terminus of the system of light railway lines which he had laid through his own dominions. Then for some distance it skirts the beautiful Vishnamitri river, on which there is a boat-house, a rifle-range, and the temple, from which there is a magnificent view of the palace down the long avenue ; and then passes the spacious parade-ground where reviews are sometimes held, the guard-room, the stables, and so back to the palace.

Here we were joined by Her Highness and were soon going at full speed across the park, over the railway and out into the country, over excellent roads, among fields of waving red and yellow grass interspersed with emerald-green wheat. The red gold of the setting sun flooded the trees and fields with an indescribably beautiful light. Strings of bullock-carts wended their way lazily along the roads, and troops of donkeys wandered along the roadside. Here and there the gaunt form of a camel stalking along with his nose in the air rose weird and solitary against the skyline. Picturesque groups of natives crouched round camp-fires, and all was still except for the distant sound of a temple bell throbbing through the warm air.

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The Maharaja spoke of the uneducated losing so much pleasure in their lives through lack of the power to appreciate what is beautiful, and we talked of the education that was to bring them this power and many other powers besides, the education that was to bridge the gulf between the East and the West and make all who possessed it able to meet on an equal footing.

We reached home soon after eight o'clock and had just time to dress for dinner, which was served at half-past eight. No ladies were present; but His Highness had invited several of my old friends to meet me, among them my old pupil Baba Saheb, whom I was very pleased to see again. He was looking very well and prosperous, though he is getting rather stout and lazy; however the Maharaja makes him work and has given him a small unpaid post in one of the Government offices, from which he must work his way up as best he can; for no incompetent people are encouraged in Baroda, even when they are relatives. He is to be married next month and has asked me to go to his wedding.

Sampatrao was there again and was telling us of a shooting expedition in Somaliland from which he has just returned. He is a very voluble talker and rattles along in the most amusing way. Every now and then he drops into the vernacular, and then the Gaekwar calls out, "Speak English, please, and then Weeden will understand," and Sampatrao, who has

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said something which he did not wish me to hear, has to wriggle out of it as best he can amid great laughter.

When dinner was over we followed His Highness to the large open terrace over the grand entrance, which had been covered with a thick carpet and furnished with chairs and tables, where we found coffee and cigars, and presently we sat down to play Bridge, the Gaekwar and Baba Saheb against Samapatrao and myself. When we were game all His Highness dealt and declared No Trumps. I held all the Clubs except the ace, so I played the king. Sampatrao played a small one, covered my queen with the ace, and had no more to return; and His Highness, bubbling over with merriment, captured the rest of the tricks and the rubber, and smacked me on the back in high glee, congratulating me ironically on the wonderful skill of my partner. Sampatrao, who is evidently a bit of a courtier, joined in the laugh against himself with great composure. Luckily we were only playing for love, as His Highness does not approve of gambling.

Soon after ten o'clock the Maharaja bade us good-night and went off to bed, and the guests drove away. When I got to my room I found Sanka in command, very happy and triumphant. He had told the Gaekwar of my difficulty in making the servants understand what I wanted, and had immediately been appointed head of my domestic staff. Under his directions I was undressed and arrayed in my sleeping-

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suit with much ceremony, and then he suggested that if I would like to be massaged there was a man there who was very good at it; so I had my feet and hands done, and very soothing and refreshing it was. When he came to the fingers and toes he pulled each one of them until it cracked. One was very obstinate and refused to crack, and he worked away at it with a most comical expression on his face, and seemed much relieved when at last it yielded to his persuasive manipulation. Sanka meanwhile had looked through all my linen and found that I had quite enough for the present. He produced a list which he had made of it, beautifully written in English, and I thanked my lucky star for having sent me such a treasure.

When he and his satellites had disappeared with profuse salaams behind the curtains I sat for some time out on the verandah smoking a final cigarette and reviewing the various events of the day. Overhead the stars were blazing with a brilliancy quite new to me, and their light was reflected in the waters of the lake below. A gentle breeze carried the peculiar aromatic fragrance of the East over the warm air, and silence reigned supreme save for the gentle murmur of rustling leaves. One by one the great arc lamps in the gardens flickered out, and the trees of the park stood revealed, silhouetted against the clear dark-blue sky.

Suddenly the stillness was broken by the measured



RAJ MAHAL.

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tramp of horses, and looking over the parapet, I saw far below a small troop of mounted soldiers pacing slowly by to change the guard, looking like ghosts in their long grey cloaks, their naked swords gleaming against their shoulders; faithful guardians of the royal home which was to be my home for months to come; the advance guard of many a brilliant spectacle which I was to be privileged to witness. With a sigh of contentment at the kindness of fortune I returned to my room, and slipping under the mosquito-curtains hanging round the bed, was soon fast asleep between sheets of finest damask on pillows of softest down, dreaming of wonders past, present and to come.

So ended my first day at Baroda. Other days have passed since then, but they must wait while I make a feeble attempt to describe the beautiful palace in which I am lodged. It is a magnificent building of white stone inlaid with marble of various colours, in which its architect, the late Major Mant, R.E., has successfully combined the styles of Northern, Central and Southern India.

In the centre are the Maharaja's apartments. They are approached by a portico of noble dimensions, under which the tallest elephant with the largest howdah on his back can pass with plenty of room to spare. Three broad steps, on which sentries in gorgeous uniforms are posted, lead into a lofty hall of white marble, opening at the top into a gallery of

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carved cedar. The hall is paved with a very rare green marble of great beauty which is found only in the Gaekwar's territory, and in the middle is a table of the same marble, at which His Highness can transact any pressing business that may await him on his return. In it are four bronze statues, the work of a famous French sculptor, representing a Dancing Girl, a Fakir, a Water-Carrier, and a Huntsman with two cheetahs in leash, each of which is a portrait of a well-known character in Baroda. Its coolness affords a most welcome relief from the heat and glare outside. More steps lead through two archways into a long gallery paved with coloured marble, off which open the waiting and reception rooms and the rooms of the various officers on duty.

Right in front is another large hall, in which stand three large tigers which have fallen to the Maharaja's rifle, and other trophies of the chase; and from it rises the grand staircase of white marble inlaid with gold, the walls of which are covered with peacocks and other birds of brilliant plumage in mosaic.

At the top of the staircase is the gallery surrounding the entrance hall and leading to the broad terrace over the portico; and right and left runs another beautiful gallery, supported by white carved stone pillars, from which you enter the drawing-room, library, reading-room and the Maharaja's study. Three beautiful courts with palms and fountains separate the dining-room from the billiard-room and

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the small Durbar hall; and the Gaekwar's private rooms are at the back.

On the floor above are Prince Shivajirao's rooms and those allotted to me, opening on to the beautiful roof gardens of the palace, which command a lovely view of the park and of the domes and minarets of the city rising from the trees. The whole is crowned by the great central dome and by the graceful tower springing two hundred feet into the air.

The southern wing of the palace is reserved for the use of the Maharani, and is, appropriately enough, built in the more graceful and florid style of Southern India, the home of the extremely ancient royal house from which Her Highness is descended. The arrangements are very much the same as in the central block, Her Highness' apartments being on the first floor, with those of Princess Indira above them, and the ground floor being used by the officials of their household. They are approached by a portico and staircase rather different in design from the main entrance but quite equal to it in spaciousness and beauty. Just within is a carefully guarded shrine dedicated to the goddess Lakshmi, from which the palace takes its name—Lakshmivilas, the "abode of the goddess of wealth." This name is seldom used, Raj Mahal, the "royal abode" being more convenient and homely. The shrine is served by a special staff of priests, and night and day lights and incense are kept burning before the sacred image.

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At the back a large hall is being built in which the Maharani will hold receptions; it is being decorated by some of the most skilled artists in India, and will probably be the most beautiful part of the palace when it is completed.

At present the chief glory of Raj Mahal is the great Durbar hall, which occupies the whole of the north wing and is built in the more severe style of Northern India, seven stately domes rising from the spacious terrace that forms its roof. No furniture detracts from the effect of its magnificent proportions save the dais at the end on which the throne stands. It is paved with costly mosaic work and surrounded by a gallery of most exquisitely carved lattice-work in cedar, and beneath the roof:

“Bright Seraphim, in burning row
Their loud, uplifted, angel-trumpets blow.”

I have never seen any other audience-chamber which so vividly recalls the description in “The Eve of St. Agnes”—

“The level chambers, ready with their pride,
Were glowing to receive a thousand guests.
The carved angels, ever eager-eyed,
Stared, where upon their heads the cornice rests,
With hair blown back, and wings put cross-wise on their breasts.”

And this chamber can glow with a vengeance, for from the carved ceiling hang twelve great chandeliers of finest crystal whose facets reflect the light of a thousand electric globes cunningly concealed amongst

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them. It is entered through the third great porch, at which the general public alight when they come to write their names in the visitors' book kept in a comfortably furnished ante-room, where those who have come upon business can pass the time of waiting at a table covered with papers and periodicals.

And now I can hear you saying that you have had quite enough about the palace, and that you are wondering whether they give me anything that I can eat. Set your mind at rest on that score; the food is excellent and is sent up every day by the principal caterer in Bombay.

The two chief meals of the day—breakfast at eleven and dinner at half-past eight—which I always have with the Maharaja, are very much what you would get at a first-class restaurant in London—Prince's or the Carlton; they are prepared by a French cook and served under the experienced eye of an English *maître d'hôtel*, Mr. Pluck, a very imposing person in a fine dark-blue coat with a velvet collar and gold buttons, with a ribbon in his buttonhole, who was butler to Lord Ampthill when he was Governor of Madras. I was rather frightened of him at first, but he has now set me at ease, and generally makes a point of pouring me out a glass of water, bringing me the mustard, or showing me some other little attention.

When there are English guests there are the usual kind of drinks, whisky and hock with seltzer at break-

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fast, and champagne and port at dinner, with liqueurs afterwards; but when we are alone we all drink water, which is very good and kept beautifully cool in silver flagons. The Maharaja never drinks anything but water, and only one glass of that half an hour after each meal, as he does not want to grow stout, most Indians being inclined to run to fat. He uses tea and coffee very sparingly and does not smoke more than ten or twelve cigarettes a week.

The sincerest form of flattery being here held in high esteem, smoking in the palace is not fashionable; but an exception is made in my favour and I am at liberty to indulge my pet vice when and where I please; and I have the less scruple about this as His Highness has little or no sense of smell. His hearing, however, is very acute and his sight good, though he uses glasses for reading, generally gold-rimmed spectacles, which he assumes in a very professional way. I think that they really are helpful to him, though Indians seem to take a childlike pleasure in putting them on as a dignified and becoming ornament.

The arrangements of the table are perfect. The linen is specially woven in Belfast; the plates and dishes are usually of silver, with gold for great occasions, and there seems to be an endless supply of them. The Gaekwar explained to me one day that they are more economical than china, as they are not easily broken; and smiled rather grimly when I said

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that I would certainly take a set back with me to England.

Silver is no more accounted of here than it was in the days of Solomon. Everything that we are accustomed to see at home made of wood and china, chairs, tables, beds, water-jugs and so on, are here made of gold and silver.

Each Maharaja as he succeeds to the throne likes to have something new, and the treasures of his predecessors are stowed away in vaults and lumber-rooms; so that when the Gaekwar wants a new dinner-service, all that he has to do is to melt down so much silver and send it to Bond Street, from which it returns brought up to date; and still the store is undiminished. There is also a profusion of fine porcelain and cut glass, into which the red and gold in the turbans of the guests throw lively notes of colour, and all is crowned with flowers, so that nothing could exceed the picturesque look of the table.

And in the midst of all this splendour, the centre and object of all this wealth and luxury, there sits the homely figure of the Gaekwar, almost pathetic in the simplicity of his white robes, without a jewel on his dress, without a ring on his finger; never with even a shilling in his pocket. A man so careless about money that until a few years ago he did not trouble to know one coin from another, utterly indifferent to the value of the treasures which

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surround him, except in so far as they are beautiful, useful and seemly.

There is no waste or extravagance, for everything is perfectly managed by a vast machinery of clerks and departments; the spirit of the Maharaja pervades and animates everything; his personal touch is impressed on all who are associated with him; but he himself does not condescend to details. He has the simplicity of a great mind and a keen sense of the beautiful. His personal tastes are of the simplest, and though he does not shrink from the pomp and ceremony that must attend him in his State because it pleases his people, he looks upon it with the indulgent smile of one who has learnt to estimate it at its true value.

In spite of so much that is modern, the impression that I have suddenly stepped into an "Arabian Nights" story is still strong upon me. Indeed, so far as I am able to analyse my feelings, the chief fascination lies in this curious intermingling of East and West which I am beginning vaguely to realize, though I have been thrown among it so suddenly that I am hardly yet able to distinguish one from the other. Perhaps next month I shall have my thoughts in better order and be able to express more clearly what I mean, but I have already seen enough to fill me with amazement at the startlingly modern personality of the Gaekwar, standing almost alone amid the most incongruous surroundings.

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AFTER a week of sight-seeing, about which I will tell you something presently, we have settled down into a rather more peaceful existence and the daily round is growing more like that which one enjoys in a large country-house in England. This is chiefly due to the arrival of Shivajirao, who came down a week ago after having floored the examiners in Bombay. When I last saw him he had just put away the Highland kilt of childhood and advanced to the dignity of an Eton jacket. He has now grown into such a fine young man, tall and strong and with good looks above the average. We were a little shy with one another at first, but that soon wore off and we are now great friends; so much so that I am sometimes afraid that the Maharaja may feel a little jealous, as we are together from the first thing in the morning till the last thing at night.

Shivajirao is very fond of riding, and he had not been in Baroda many hours before he carried me off with him to the stables. These are in the compound about five hundred yards from the palace, behind a thick grove of trees. They are divided into four great

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courts : in the first are the gold and silver carriages which are shown to visitors and used on certain great occasions, quite a dozen of them, made of solid gold with silver wheels and india-rubber tyres, with harness and all to match; victorias, landaus and wagnettes. The prettiest of all are the bullock carts, with the cloth of gold with which the bullocks are covered from head to foot and the scores of gold and silver bells with which they are decked. Behind each carriage is a large glass case, in which all these beautiful things are displayed. The rest of the court is occupied by coach-houses for the carriages kept for the use of their Highnesses, all of which are of the latest modern English build. There are also four large motor-cars, two belonging to the Gaekwar and the others to the Maharani and Shivajirao. Two of the chauffeurs are Italians, the other two being Eurasians. In the centre of this court is a Hindu temple, where the half-naked stable-boys may frequently be seen performing their ablutions and other devotions. In the second court are kept the carriages used by State officials and other people in the Gaekwar's service; and in the third are the horses maintained for their use. The fourth court is by far the most fascinating and picturesque: here are kept the horses which the Royal family use for riding and driving, Arabs, Walers, English thoroughbreds, Irish hunters, such darlings, poking their noses over the doors of their loose-boxes to see who is coming.



A SILVER CARRIAGE.

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The floor of the court is covered with tan and planted with trees, forming a delightful riding school, and in the centre is a great well. Here we were met by Sergeant-Major Faye, a pleasant and obliging Irish soldier, who has the charge of the stables and drives His Highness. Chairs were brought and we sat in the shade while Shivajirao's polo ponies, beautiful animals all of them, were led round by grooms. The next thing we had to do was to choose a horse for me. After trying several, I fell in love with two of them, far and away the most perfect horses I have ever ridden. The first, Dilrubah, a beautiful white Arab, is one of the great pets of the stable and is wonderfully clever. While one of the grooms played a weird tune on a pipe, he paced along keeping perfect time to the music, waving his lovely mane, and his long, flowing tail; and then, at a given signal, rose on his hind legs and walked along beating the air with his fore-legs in the most enchanting manner. The other, Slowcoach, is a Waler, and more like a human being than a horse: Shivajirao bought him as a polo pony, but found that he was not quick enough. He is wonderfully docile and intelligent, and trots as well as he canters, which is a great thing, as most of the horses here are encouraged to canter at the expense of their trotting.

So now the first event of the day is the early morning ride. As soon as the first glimmer of light appears, Sanka brings my *chota hazri* of fragrant tea,

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toast, omelette and fruit, which I eat while I am being dressed, for there is no time to be lost. The horses are already waiting down below, led up and down by grooms.

I look over the balcony and call to Slowcoach, who looks up, saying as plainly as possible that he hopes I shall not forget to slip an apple into my pocket for him: so in it goes, and a few lumps of sugar as well. Then to Shivajirao's rooms, where I am not the first visitor; his cousin, Pilajirao, the old Harrow boy, is already there chatting to him, while two servants are pulling on his top-boots, and a third is folding yard after yard of muslin round his head, making what we should call a turban, but which they call a *fetah*. Into the lift we go and are soon down below among our beloved steeds, mounted and away.

But first we must go to pick up Roger Turnbull, Shivajirao's tutor, who is a good sportsman as well as a scholar, and lives in a nice bungalow just outside the palace compound. He is waiting for us and we ride leisurely along side by side for a mile or more down the broad road, laughing over the latest bit of scandal from the mess table at the camp where Turnbull was dining last night.

Leaving the road we plunge into one of the innumerable leafy lanes which afford delightful rides round Baroda for miles in every direction; it is narrow, and we fall into single file, bending our heads occasionally to avoid an overhanging branch,

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till we reach a village of small mud houses, with here and there a more pretentious wooden dwelling, with its tiny temple nestling among the trees on the bank of a large tank of pure water, from which the women are filling the shining pots of brass which they carry on their heads.

Here the path broadens into a wide sandy track, along which we scamper for a couple of miles, and which brings us out on to an open common covered with stunted trees in which flocks of brilliant parrots are screaming. A herd of deer, startled at our approach, look timidly at us, and then make off with quick bounds until they disappear in the distance: the woods through which we pass are full of monkeys who are also greatly perturbed; with shrill cries they call to their little ones, who come running up to their mothers, and cling to their breasts and so are carried away with great leaps to the shelter of the tree tops, from which they chatter defiance at us. Then a steep, rough path brings us to a ford across the river through which we splash, urging on the horses, which would like to stop and drink. Once across, we give them their heads again and let them scramble up the bank as best they can, and then, by more winding paths, to another village, where a troop of savage dogs comes yelping at our heels: the horses, however, are used to them and treat them with contempt, while they, for their part, are careful to keep out of range of our whips.

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As we are leaving the village we meet a herd of buffaloes completely blocking up the narrow path; they lower their heads as if to charge us, but the men driving them soon clear them out of the way of the sahibs, and they go plunging through the cactus hedges on either side, or flying in utter rout before us. In pity for their poor, patient owners, who may find it a morning's work to collect them again, we cut them off one by one with shouts and laughter till we have passed them all, and find ourselves eventually on another broad road which will bring us out, after a few miles, on to the race-course. Far away over the trees the graceful tower of Raj Mahal rises into the cloudless sky, a beautiful land-mark in whatever direction we may be, and warns us that it is time to be turning our horses' heads homewards. They are still fresh enough for a race, however, and when we reach the race-course we have one, Slowcoach, the keenest of all, straining every nerve not to be left behind. The race-course is a complete circle two miles long; a good road runs parallel with it, and the land inside is occupied by several small farms. It is kept in good order, and each furlong is marked by a post in the hedge.

As we pass the Grand Stand we see a motor-car waiting there, and the chauffeur calls out to warn us that His Highness is riding not far ahead with the Princess, so we pull up a bit and soon catch them up. It is the first morning that Princess Indiraraja

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has been out since her illness, and you can imagine what a joyful surprise it is to me to meet her so unexpectedly. She is looking awfully nice, sitting astride her horse in a dark grey frock-coated suit which fits her beautiful figure so perfectly that it is evidently not the work of an Indian tailor. Under her hard felt hat her lovely dark hair is gathered into a heavy plait that falls below her waist. She is still rather pale, but the exercise has already brought a faint rose-pink flush to her olive cheeks.

When I last saw her she was a schoolgirl at Eastbourne, charming enough certainly as I remember her rushing into the drawing-room, wild with delight at seeing her parents again, with a magnificent mane of hair flowing over her shoulders; but I was hardly prepared to see such a beautiful woman as she has become in three short years. As we trotted back to the palace together, she talked so prettily about Slowcoach that he was quite delighted, and she made me admire her own mount, a beautiful mare called Albela given her by the Maharaja of Mysore.

On the mornings when I ride with the Maharaja there is more of a cavalcade; the A.D.C. on duty always comes with us, and there are generally two or three other friends with several grooms in attendance. It is altogether a more formal affair and there is no scampering gaily across country. His Highness likes to stick to the high road and to go straight ahead without stopping for anyone or anything, so that one

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has to be prepared not to draw rein from start to finish. He does not care about going very fast and always has his horse perfectly under control, so that it is sometimes difficult, especially on the turf, to prevent one's own horse getting ahead of his, which would be a great breach of etiquette. He talks nearly all the time, so if your horse is a bit fresh your attention is fully occupied, and you feel on your return that you have done a good morning's work.

His day's work, however, is only just beginning. At the end of the long corridor, looking down into the great Durbar hall, are two charming rooms which are always beautifully shady and fresh in the morning; and here, as soon as we have bathed and changed, we meet every day at about half-past nine to read till breakfast.

Faithful to our old traditions we keep two books going, one on some philosophical or scientific subject and one of general literature. The first is chosen by the Maharaja, the second by myself, and as he likes big books and I like little ones we get variety in this way. We have embarked on the Dialogues of Plato in Jowett's sumptuous translation, with the Greek text handy for reference, and are already half way through the Republic. My first choice, the "Vicar of Wakefield," was a very happy one, as he liked it very much, and read nearly all of it himself, though we are by way of taking it in turns to read aloud. De Quincey's Essays were not so successful;

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but Barrie's "Little White Bird" seems likely to surpass my fondest hopes. The laughter in it is often so near to tears and the humour so quaint and modern that I was half afraid it might not appeal to the Oriental imagination, but the Gaekwar's alert mind revels in grasping new ideas and penetrating subtleties of thought and expression. He has fallen very much in love with David, and when that delightful little person appears on the scene I have to hand the book over, not unwillingly, for it is very pleasant to hear the Maharaja read aloud when he is interested in his subject.

Sometimes, when a new idea strikes him which he would like to develop further, the Gaekwar gives a long, low whistle, which brings the A.D.C. who has been sitting reading the newspaper in the next room, and who makes a note of it in his pocket-book. These notes are transferred from time to time to the private secretary, who tabulates them, and they are dealt with later in the day. I must tell you something about these Aides. There used to be fourteen of them, coming on duty once a fortnight, so that they never learnt their work properly, and were more trouble than they were worth. So His Highness made them pass an examination and chose the three best, who are now very good indeed. Each of them is on duty for twenty-four hours at a time, coming to the palace at nine o'clock in the morning, and sleeping in his apartments on the ground floor; when he

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is not invited to the Gaekwar's table he has his meals with the other officers of the household. When on duty they wear a smart military uniform of white cloth with gold buttons, and each must be provided with a pencil, a note-book and a pocket-knife. They are all very pleasant, intelligent men, and it is to them that I go when I want any matter settled with which it is not worth while to trouble His Highness.

Nimbalker, whom I have already introduced to you, is a Maharatta and a connection of the Gaekwar's family. He knows the Maharaja by heart and gets on very well with him, being quick to anticipate his wishes and to offer acceptable counsel. His Highness is fond of acting on the spur of the moment and likes to exercise his privilege of changing his mind, so that it is not always easy to say what he is going to do; but Nimbalker's barometer is seldom at fault. He is a good cricketer and tennis player, rides well and can take a hand at bridge, and is deservedly popular with all in Baroda, English or native. He talks well and amusingly, reads a great deal, and has been round the world with His Highness, so that he is a very pleasant companion.

Shivraj Sinhji is a Rajput, of a more reserved and conservative type, but very courteous and well-mannered.

Parab, the third of the trio, is amiability itself, though he has not yet acquired the *savoir faire* of the others; his long, loose limbs, which he has not yet

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got thoroughly under control, give him the appearance of an over-grown schoolboy, while his wandering eyes and absent-minded remarks betray the nervousness which he does his best to conceal.

There is no reason why anyone should be nervous with the Maharaja, as he is wonderfully patient with the crowd of stupid, idle servants with whom it is a tradition to do one thing only and to do that as badly as possible: small fines are sometimes inflicted, but no one is ever punished at all seriously. He is gradually having some of them trained to be more useful, but, meanwhile, his English valet is a great comfort to him—a capital fellow named Neale from the Army.

To-day we had two guests at breakfast, Colonel Meade, the Resident at Baroda, and General Evans-Gordon, who is in command of the Gaekwar's army.

The Resident is a jolly, easy-going old fellow, short and stout, who is quite happy, so long as he gets his golf and his bridge every day; his family has been connected with Baroda for many years, and he gets on very well with the Gaekwar, for whom he evidently entertains a sincere regard.

The General is an elder brother of my old friend Sir William Evans-Gordon, and is a perfectly charming man of the old school, with beautiful manners and an inexhaustible supply of amusing stories. I enjoyed meeting him very much and hearing all the latest news of his brother and Lady Tweeddale. After seven

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years of Stepney and undesirable aliens, Willie has become disillusioned with politics and has returned to his beloved 'cello and the goodly company of musicians.

After breakfast we always spend an hour in the billiard-room. The Gaekwar has a short game and then hands his cue to someone else, so that he may talk to his guests. At one o'clock he goes to his office on the ground-floor to work with his secretary all through the long afternoon; "My shop" as he cheerily calls it. It must be very trying to work during the hot hours of the day, but he never grumbles about it.

The waiting room is full of officials whom he will have to attend to one after the other, like a Harley Street doctor with his patients, and it is sometimes almost six o'clock before he has finished.

The Durbar porch is a curious sight at this time, filled with umbrellas and shoes of all conceivable shapes and colours. No one, except privileged inmates and English visitors, wears shoes in the palace, but all are expected to wear socks. Even the Maharaja himself always kicks off his shoes before entering the dining-room and they are brought and put on by a servant before he leaves it again. I have now quite got into the habit of leaving mine outside too, and find it a most comfortable custom; only one has to be careful to see that one's socks are really a pair and that there are no holes in them!

When we have attended His Highness to the top

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of the grand staircase and watched him descend into his den of lions, Shivajirao takes me back to the billiard-room where we have a really good game, as we are fairly matched. The billiard-room is entered by two archways from the card-room, each room being furnished as it would be in a London Club, the only difference being that the balls are composition, as ivory balls would crack in this climate. The cloth and cushions of the table are perfect, and the balls are returned automatically from the pockets to baulk.

All is under the charge of my very good friend Morenas, a Parsi expert of great skill, who drives up to the palace twice a day in his bright-red biscuit box and is always ready to show how a stroke should be played or to give me three out of five hundred and a beating into the bargain. He is a much privileged person and a great favourite with all the Gaekwar's family.

The marker is a most humorous individual of woeful countenance. His knowledge of English is perfect, so far as it extends, which is from the numeral one to the numeral a hundred. He sails through them gaily enough until he reaches the troubled waters of the sixties where he always has a bad time. When this point of the game is reached it is becoming a standing joke to call for the score after each stroke, and the marker's agonized face as he stammers out "sixty-five, sixty-one" provokes much

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mirth. When he is safe again among the seventies he throws an almost reproachful grin in my direction, as much as to say that he knows quite well who it is that has troubled his peace.

By this time it is getting rather hot in the billiard-room in spite of the water which coolies are throwing upon the awning over the skylight, and I am glad to seek the shade of my cool verandah and to exchange my "harness" (as the Maharaja's servants call his English kit) for a costume similar to what one wears in a Turkish bath. Thus lightly arrayed I can read, write or sleep in comparative comfort until my afternoon tea is brought and it is time to join Shivajirao at the tennis-courts. Here there are no lucky flukes to help me to a game now and then, as in the billiard-room, and I have to acknowledge my master and take defeat as gracefully as I can, very well pleased with myself if I can win four games out of ten. But doubles are more popular than singles, and a match between Shivajirao and myself against Turnbull and Pilajirao produces an exciting struggle. After three or four sets I have had enough, but Shivajirao's muscles are still clamouring for exercise, so we stroll across to the cricket-ground, where the nets are up for practice.

A professional bowler from Bombay has instilled the rudiments of his art into the green and gold boys, and the cousins are soon sending the balls flying in every direction, the bare-footed fielders skipping

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nimbly out of the way. Four or five other young cousins arrive on the scene, equip themselves out of the heap of bats and pads that are lying about, and learn to keep up their wicket with a straight bat. I have not played the game since I left Rugby, but they are not going to let me off, and my bails are sent flying ten times in as many minutes, during which I get enough exercise to last me for a week.

A change of clothes awaits us in the Maharaja's School, which has ten or twelve smaller rooms besides the large central hall. There is a piano here, and Pilajirao gives us a Harrow song; and then comes what is in some ways the most delightful event of the day, a meet of the Lapait Club. In other words, Shivajirao is going to take us for a drive. In whatever direction we may go into the country, it is a *sine qua non* that we shall finish up by passing through Baroda city, and show them what skill can do in taking a coach-and-four through the narrow streets (*lapait*) which lie behind the main thoroughfares. The kind of vehicle varies from day to day: sometimes it is a wagonette, sometimes a dogcart with the horses tandem-wise; but whatever it may be, our skilful young whip always offers me the place of honour next to him on the box. As many of his young friends as there is room for clamber up behind, and merry fellows they are, keeping up a running fire of jokes and laughter all the way. Shivajirao loves to

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talk of Oxford, and I have to spin all the yarns I can think of about my own happy days there.

We discuss what college he shall go to—shall it be Magdalen or Christ Church? What Schools he shall read for, Law or History? Shall he be content with a pass-degree or go in for honours? Most important of all, what chance has he of obtaining the coveted Blue at cricket? The hopes of youth leap high, fly fast; and while he checks his own fiery thoroughbreds I have to do a little rein-pulling too, and boast of the high standard which Oxford maintains in games and in the Schools, and the absolute necessity of hard, serious work if a man hopes to rise above the common level. He listens and laughs good-humouredly and gives a final blast on the trumpet of optimism, secretly thinking me an old fogey, though there is no one more anxious than I am that our dear, brave, light-hearted, clever boy may get all that he has set his heart on.

When we have gone some miles and the horses have lost their first freshness, I must needs take the reins literally and have a lesson in the art of driving, which has not hitherto been one of my accomplishments and makes my hands ache badly; so I am not sorry when we enter the outskirts of the town and the old walls appear. Baroda is a fortified city which reminds me in many ways of Chester; it is built in the form of a cross, with lofty gateways at the end of the four principal streets and a fine pavilion of

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Mohammedan architecture in the centre, over which the blood-red flag of the State floats.

The streets are broad and picturesque with quaint native shops and houses, many of which are adorned with specimens of fine old wood-carving. The shops are for the most part open to the street up a few steps, and each street has its own special commodity; on one side is a row of shops filled with nothing but shoes, on the other the workers in brass and copper drown the clamour of voices with their hammering.

At this hour they are dimly lighted by small oil lamps, in strange contrast to the large electric globes that are hung at intervals across the streets, and are full of people who seem to be doing more talking than buying. The bazaar swarms with quaint specimens of humanity in every kind of dress and undress, flowing up and down like a many-coloured tide. The air is laden with strange spicy scents and is filled with the incessant din of many voices bargaining for the goods spread out in profusion on the ground—fruit, vegetables, grain, brass, silver, clothes, and every other commodity that forms a necessity or a luxury in native life.

Near to the central pavilion are the long rambling galleries of the Old Palace, with its steep, narrow staircases of painted wood. On the other side of the road is a similar building, which now contains the fine library which Sampatrao has collected and presented to the State.

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Round the corner, in its green and spacious gardens is the Nazarbag Palace, a graceful pile of white marble in which the priceless jewels are guarded, and which is used to lodge native Princes when they visit the Gaekwar; beyond this are the white wards of the Marchioness of Dufferin's Hospital, a modern building looking contemptuously down on the ancient mud walls of the Guard House, in which gold and silver guns are kept. As we pass it a bugler blows a salute and the guard come tumbling out in great confusion to "present arms," as an excited native serjeant is calling on them to do in the regulation tones of the British Army. We are almost out of earshot before we hear the roll of the drums and the shrill notes of the fifes tootling out a long, rambling National Anthem which a native bandmaster has cribbed from the Marseillaise.

While Shivajirao is amusing himself by taking his horses into the most impossible places among the narrow, winding streets with which the city is honey-combed, I notice with surprise the number of places in which the work of demolition is going on.

It is the Maharaja's desire that Baroda should be laid out spaciouly, and ever since his accession he has been striving to prevent the great curse of overcrowding, which is one of the principal causes of the rapid spread of plague and other diseases. The work must necessarily be slow owing to the density of the population and the stubborn tenacity with which



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they cling to old ideas and associations; there is, however, one important factor in the case which alone makes it possible for him to attempt it: the whole place belongs to him; he not only rules it, but it is his own private property. I had not realized this until the other day when I was driving with the Gaekwar in his motor-car past the great lake, or tank, as they call it here, which lies just outside the city walls. On three sides it is surrounded by a broad roadway planted with shady trees, but on the fourth side the houses come right up to the water's edge.

We pulled up for a few minutes to look at the animated scene, if anything can be called animated in India, where everything is done so leisurely. The steps of the tank were covered with men performing their evening ablutions; women stood chatting in groups as they filled their water-pots; and the surface of the water was dotted with the dark heads of boys who were swimming. I said that it was a pity we could not drive right round the tank.

"Yes," said the Maharaja, "I have often thought so myself. I think I will pull down those houses and carry the road right round."

Nimbalker, who was sitting next to the chauffeur, was called to the window: out came the pencil and the note-book and down it went.

I said that he might not be able to acquire the houses.

"Oh," he said simply, "they belong to me."

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I asked whether he had much property in Baroda. He was rather amused and told me with a smile that it *all* belonged to him; all the land, all the houses, all the revenue, all the rates and taxes are his personal private property, which he disposes of as he thinks fit. How well and wisely he uses the enormous resources at his command one has not to live very long in Baroda to discover. He lives in the magnificent style expected of an Oriental ruler by his people; but his own personal expenditure is a mere trifle as compared with the large sums which are spent annually on public works and buildings. His position seems to be that of a despotic monarch governing constitutionally; appointing a Council to advise him, judges to administer his laws, departments to carry out the work of administration; and distributing his revenues in such a way as to be for the greatest good of the whole State; and he looks forward to the day when each one of his subjects will be educated sufficiently to be able to take his share in the work of government.

Of course not one in a thousand of his subjects understands this: they salaam profoundly as he passes, but if he were to go by covered with diamonds on an elephant they would prostrate themselves in the dust. They take all that he does for them very much as a matter of course, partly because they are incapable of appreciating it; and if he spent all his money on himself they would probably respect him

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far more than they do. They are impressed only by the display for which he cares so little.

When the Maharaja drives out in the afternoon a cavalry escort is always waiting at the palace gates; when he appears they divide into two parties, one going before the carriage, the other following it; but as soon as they are clear of the town he sends them back, and when he is in a motor-car he generally dismisses them at once. The other evening when I was going for a drive with the Gaekwar in the car into the country, he was so busy talking of other matters that he forgot all about them; we were going pretty fast, and they had to ride for all they were worth to keep up. At last I noticed that the horses were getting rather blown and drew his attention to it. He stopped at once and sent them back home, giving the unfortunate Parab, who had, I think, been secretly rather pleased at this unwonted fit of royal indifference, a pretty severe rebuke.

But to return to the meet of the Lapait Club. While we were driving through the country the grooms, or *gadi-walas*, to give them their proper name, whose bare feet look rather odd beneath their smart liveries, hung on behind the carriage, only running in front now and then to clear a stray buffalo, donkey or chicken out of the way; but in the crowded streets they run ahead all the time shouting out "Hey! Jàne Wala" or "Hey! Ghari Wala," meaning "Hi! you who are walking there

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(or driving, as the case may be), clear out." They are helped in this by the numerous policemen, dressed in dark-blue uniforms with high cloth caps, who swarm in Baroda and who are always extraordinary zealous when we approach, rushing upon the people with great energy, haling them out of the way by the scruff of the neck or striking them with their truncheons. Even thus it is no easy matter to clear a passage, so many people, seemingly bemused by opium, are wandering aimlessly about in the middle of the road, and each carriage is provided with a loud bell on the footboard, which can be pressed with the foot.

You may imagine that altogether there is a pretty good row, especially if you are passing one of the many temples that abound when the priest is thumping on his gong, whether to call the faithful to prayers or as an act of devotion I have not yet discovered. The refrain, "Hey! Jāne Wala!" is a very haunting one and I often find myself humming it to any tune that happens to come into my head.

Another curious feature of the Baroda streets are the altar-like tombs of saintly persons which are built right in the middle of the road. They are decked with flowers and twinkling lights (which are very useful after dark); a little stick of incense sends up a curl of smoke before them, and sometimes they are covered with a green cloth. They are in more ways than one a stumbling-block in the path of progress,

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as they are so sacred that not even the power of the Gaekwar can remove them, and their owners, whoever they may be, are apparently not troubled with utilitarian aspirations.

It is all so fascinating that one would like to stay out for hours longer; but whatever happens we must not be late for dinner, so we drop Pilajirao at his home near the central pavilion, one of the few large houses in the city, where he probably lives with his father and mother and grandfather and grandmother, and as many uncles and aunts as can be squeezed in, for the idea of the family is very strong in India and they all love to herd together as long as possible. It must seem strange to him after his English education, but he takes it very philosophically and trips up the staircase with a cheery wave of his hand. What he will do with himself for the rest of the evening goodness only knows—probably nothing at all.

None of these other native people ever seems to think of asking you to enter his house. I suppose they have nothing for you to sit upon and nothing to amuse you with, except, perhaps, a dreary gramophone. Like wise men they find all their amusement and occupation out in the open air, and use their houses just to eat and sleep in.

Then Shivajirao, who is always kind and considerate, goes out of his way to drop his other friends at their homes, and we return to the palace a much smaller and quieter party than when we left it. After the

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noise and bustle of streets the broad avenues and lawns are delightfully restful, and Raj Mahal looks more fairy-like than ever gleaming with cheerful lights. If it is Friday a throng of nobles in brilliant robes and swords of honour in velvet sheaths are waiting with little offerings of corn, flowers and sweetmeats for the Maharaja, who touches them in token of acceptance and they are then collected by a servant.

While we are being taken up in the lift above the heads of the bowing crowd His Highness hands one of the little packets to me and another to Shivajirao, which we receive ceremoniously, and when I reach my landing I distribute the contents between the lift-man and Sanka, who receive them with outstretched hands and bowed heads as if it were a sort of sacrament.

Every afternoon when the Gaekwar goes for his drive an old woman nearly ninety years old is waiting in the hall concealed behind a pillar; as he passes she comes forward trembling with devotional feeling and bowing to the ground as she hands him a bouquet of flowers which, like all the native nosegays, is made of blossoms arranged in a formal pattern and bound very closely together.

When we are in the car he hands it over to me, and if it is still in existence when we come back I give it to Nimbalker, who gives it to the man who takes off his boots, who probably takes it home and

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presents it formally to his wife. In this House-that-Jack-built way a number of polite attentions are exchanged without any trouble or expense to anyone except the old crone who makes the bouquet and the Maharaja, who allows her a comfortable pension.

At this hour a fragrant scent, so slight as to be almost imperceptible, pervades the palace. At sunset a servant paces slowly through all the rooms and corridors bearing a great pan of burning incense; this makes everything very sweet and is considered to be a good disinfectant. It drives away any mosquitoes that may be hovering about, and as they also have a holy horror of electric fans we are not much troubled by them.

If I have been bitten during the afternoon, a message to the surgery brings a cooling lotion which takes away all irritation, and every day by the Maharaja's orders one of the doctor's assistants brings me a couple of quinine pills as a preventive against fever.

Our dinner-table is now graced almost every night by the presence of the Maharani and Princess Indira. The men of the party assemble first in the library, where all the Indian and several of the English daily papers and most of the English weekly illustrated and monthly magazines are placed as they arrive, and there is usually some interesting piece of news which is being eagerly discussed when Mr. Pluck appears to

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say that dinner is served and that Her Highness has left her apartments.

As we enter through the door she comes in through the verandah, followed by the Princess; they both make an extremely graceful reverence to the Maharaja, touching the ground before them with their hands like the Three Little Maids in *The Mikado*, and Indira makes a similar reverence to her brother. They greet me with a bow and we all sit down, Maharaja at the head of the table with Shivajirao opposite to him, Maharani and myself on one side, Indira and Owchitrao Kaka on the other.

Very often there are two menus, as the ladies may prefer to have Indian dishes, which are served on large golden trays, placed before them on the table. This makes the dinner rather long, as the Indian food is very good and Maharani insists on my tasting a good many of her dishes besides our own.

Sometimes when a dish is very popular it goes all round the table. The Indian brown sauces are very rich and good, and many of the vegetables excellent. The best dish of all is the pillaw, made of beautifully cooked dry rice, chicken, raisins, almonds and spicy stuffing, covered with gold or silver leaf which gives it a very gay look. It is served with a most delicious white sauce flavoured with orange or pineapple.

There is also an almond cream covered with silver-leaf which is far more exquisite than any other sweetmeat that I have ever eaten. I used to think

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that I had ceased to care for sweets, but I know now that I am only just beginning to understand what they are.

Meanwhile there has been plenty of conversation. The Maharani has a fine perception of affairs diplomatic and political; she holds strong opinions of her own on almost every subject and expresses them forcibly and wittily, showing great correctness of appreciation, and often preserving in her fluent and perfect English the picturesque idiom of Oriental expressions. Sometimes when she is excited by an argument she begins to speak in Mahratti very rapidly and with eloquent gestures, making Maharaja shake with laughter. It gives one the impression of being a delightful language for conversational purposes, and I must try to learn to understand it, if not to speak it. When Her Highness dines with us no Mahratta servants are present, their place being taken by "Goa Boys," who are very quick and intelligent.

When dinner is over the old Mohammedan butler, Mungal Khan, who brought my tea on the morning of my arrival, wheels round the table a large silver apparatus containing an urn of water, a basin and a box of powdered soap, and we all wash our hands. My friends also wash out their mouths, doing it so gracefully and naturally that it does not even make you smile. Maharaja says that it is the secret of their having such beautiful teeth and advises me to acquire the habit, but the water is too cold for my

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degenerate gums and I should only succeed in making a fool of myself, which I should be sorry to do when pretty Indira is looking on. She has been chatting gaily with her brother, of whom she is very fond, and has made me give an account of my doings during the day, which never fail to interest her.

She has a charming knack of pouring water into her glass with her left hand, twisting the carafe over backwards like a conjuring trick. I tried to do it, nearly drowning the Maharani in the attempt. It would have been dreadful if she were not so awfully good-natured. But they all are that : we have been chaffing Owchitrao Kaka unmercifully and he has taken it all like an angel. He is one of the most beautiful old men I have ever seen, with fine features and a glorious beard, which he parts in the middle and keeps very carefully brushed. He usually wears one of the long embroidered cloaks which they call Indian shawls, and clings to the habits and customs of his ancestors, *laudator temporis acti*, though he is by no means indifferent to the creature comforts of modern refinement, and takes a childlike delight in any new invention which the Maharaja introduces.

As they all love him and make a great pet of him they usually call him simply *Kaka*, which means paternal uncle. There are many other quaint terms of endearment like that in Mahratti, which is a very homely language, such as *Mama*, maternal uncle; *Masahib*, mother; *Dada*, elder brother. The Gaekwar

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has other uncles, but this dear old fellow is Kaka *par excellence*. He is a perpetual source of delight to me, and I am sure that if he could only be launched into London Society he might easily become the "lion" of the season. He has plenty to say, and his elementary English and old-fashioned ideas make it very amusing to listen to him.

One of the Maharani's women now makes her appearance with a gold cup with a lid to it, which reminds me of Joseph's "cup of divination," full of the purest and coldest water, and a gold box studded with large emeralds and diamonds, containing the finest betel-nut that can be procured. Her Highness is very particular about it, and often cuts the nuts herself into shavings with a sharp instrument, examining them critically and rejecting anything that is at all faulty.

Fruit, which we have in abundance at other times of the day, is not eaten after dinner, being considered unhealthy in the evening, but there is plenty of desert of other kinds, and as we leave the room one of the servants stands by the door holding a tray of betel-nut, cardamom, almonds and cloves, from which we help ourselves. Kaka produces from some mysterious pocket a large silver box, stuffed with *Pan-supari*, areca-nut rolled in the green leaves of the betel creeper, which he crams into his mouth, and we all stroll together down the corridor to the billiard room, Maharaja leading the way.

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The ladies, of course, are wearing Indian dress with bare feet, and it is charming to see them moving lazily along with graceful, swaying gait, the light sparkling from a hundred jewels and from the shimmering gold thread of their magnificent *saris*, which now and then slip backwards from their heads and are replaced with a careless wave of beautiful arms.

When we reach the billiard-room, the marker of the woeful countenance scuttles off with deprecatory gestures and Morenas takes his place. The Maharani sits down to watch the game, and soon gathers her skirts beneath her in Indian fashion, bending forward to make coffee which her women have placed on the table beside her. I offer my cigarette-case to Kaka, and we all burst into laughter as he waves it virtuously away, for we know that he is really an awful old chimney, and will take one fast enough later on. His Highness has one, however, and smokes it very quickly, puffing out great clouds with his accustomed vigour. He keeps up a running fire of conversation with the spectators, and his game suffers from want of attention; but when I am nearly home, he wakes up to the gravity of the situation and concentrates all his energy on a big break which gives him the game. Kaka trots round the table fielding the balls and giving advice to the players, whether they ask for it or not; he is very pleased with a new word he has learnt from me, and when

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you make a "beastly fluke" he announces the fact with a grim chuckle. Every few minutes he disappears on to the balcony, to get rid of superfluous betel-nut juice, as Shivajirao tells me in a delighted whisper. When his own turn comes to play, his ample proportions occasionally make it difficult for him to reach the ball, and we each take a leg and hoist him up on to the table, where he lies helpless, calling for assistance which we are too weak with laughter to give him.

Sometimes Maharani, who takes a great interest in the game and criticizes our play freely, plays a game herself with Indira or has a lesson from Morenas, who covers the cloth with diagrams in chalk with the sure hand of a skilled artist. Her Highness does everything very thoroughly, and never gives up the most difficult stroke till she has mastered it, however many times it may have to be repeated, and she ought soon to be a finished player.

No one sits up late. Indira is the first to go, as she is working for the Matriculation examination at Bombay University and has to be up betimes. She kisses her mother, bends to the ground before Maharaja, and trips lightly away to enjoy the dreamless slumbers of happy innocence. Unless Maharaja is wakeful and wants to play Bridge we all soon follow her example as best we may. Bidding Their Highnesses good-night when we reach the staircase, Shivajirao and I accompany Kaka to his

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carriage, and as he drives away we can hear him chatting with his servants like the fine old patriarch that he is. Then, after lingering awhile on the stairs making plans for the morrow, we go to bed ourselves. Sanka is lying wrapped up in his blanket, head and all, just outside my door, fast asleep, and I have to turn him over several times with my foot before he understands what is happening, when he snatches hastily at his *puggari*, as it would be very disrespectful for him to be in my presence with his head uncovered or wearing shoes.

Every night while we are at dinner, a company of players arrives to give a performance under the portico outside the Durbar hall, which is very popular with the servants. Chairs are always placed for His Highness and his guests, and we often go and watch it. Even when the others do not care to come, I usually watch it for a few minutes, and it is most amusing.

There is no lack of variety of entertainment—short plays presented by Hindu or Mohammedan actors, who change their clothes with wonderful rapidity behind two small screens; the best troop of acrobats I have ever seen in my life; dancing by Guzerati or Tanjore nautch-girls; marvellous conjurers, who do all the famous tricks that one has heard of: the boy who is crammed into a small basket into which sharp swords are thrust, and comes out none the worse for it; the mango-tree which grows from a seed and bears



Your sincere Friend
Seyen Rao Gakhwar.

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fruit before your eyes ; the gentleman who throws a rope into the air, climbs up it and disappears into space. All these things are done within a few feet of you, without any accessories, the ground being covered with a large white carpet, and standard lamps arranged so as to throw a bright light upon the scene. I like the snake-charmers better than anything else ; the wicked heads of the cobras, their cruel, unwinking eyes, and their restless, forked tongues have an irresistible fascination for me.

The music is of the weirdest kind, each troupe having its own musicians attached to it ; there are generally two or three stringed instruments, played 'cello-fashion, a shrill pipe which comes in with the most startling effect, and a man who plays with his fingers on a small drum, who works himself up to a tremendous pitch of excitement and seems to lead the others.

You may imagine how many quaint figures there are in this motley crowd, some venerable, others ridiculous, but very few pathetic ; they all seem quite content to play their little part in life and to receive the pittance which supplies their simple wants. Perhaps the quaintest of the whole lot is the leader of the troupe of acrobats. Years older than his young pupils, he is yet dressed in the same bright pink "tights" with gaudy spangles, which hang in crinkled folds from his meagre limbs. He does not take part himself in the performance, but directs it

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like a drill-sergeant, ringing a little bell before each change of posture. The monotony of this eternal tinkling would be dreadful were it not so extremely characteristic of the total absence of humour which enables so many of these people to do the most absurd things with perfect gravity.

It never occurs to him or to any one else that if his troupe were better trained, he and his bell could efface themselves at the actual performance with great advantage. With his shrivelled body bent double with excitement and his yellow teeth bared in a ghastly grin, he will go on ringing his bell every five seconds to the end of time.

I cannot give you the plot of any of these plays, as, however one may thirst for information, it is by no means easy to get it. There is usually some gorgeously attired person whom the other players call "Maharaja," while they play every kind of trick upon him behind his back.

One evening a man with a fine voice sang a long, rollicking *aria* rather like a buffo song from an Italian opera. It was much applauded, and I asked the native gentleman attending me if it was a comic song. "Yes," he said, "that is it—a comic song." So I asked him if he would tell me what it was about. "Oh," he replied, in the airy way they all have, "some little praise of God, and all that!"

We have just been celebrating one of the great Hindu festivals, the *Diwàli*, or "feast of lamps," held

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in honour of Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth, so you will not be surprised to hear that it is a great day in Baroda. It began with a grand State function—the removal of the *Gadi*, or throne, from the Old Palace to Lakshmivilas. We were awakened in the morning by the boom of cannon firing a salute in the park, and while I was dressing Dr. Jadhav came for me, and we drove together to the Courts of Justice, a handsome building just outside the city gate and facing the great tank.

Seats had been placed for us on the balcony in the shade, and we amused ourselves for some time watching the people surging along in the street below, pushed hither and thither by shouting policemen, whose frantic efforts to reduce them to some kind of order only made confusion worse confounded.

Presently the Maharana of Lunawada, who is a tributary Prince of the Gaekwar and is staying at the Nazarbag Palace, arrived in his carriage; he is partially paralysed, and was helped to the seat next to mine by his two nephews, handsome men with black beards and grave, reserved manners.

Soon afterwards the troops marched past, headed by the band escorting Maharaja to the Old Palace. He was driving with Shivajirao by his side, in an open landau drawn by eight lovely white Arab horses led by grooms, and was greeted by the crowd with the greatest enthusiasm. Kaka and a crowd of other nobles followed, some in carriages and others on foot,

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looking very brave in their flowing robes and jewelled swords.

The ceremonial at the Old Palace was very short, Maharaja taking his seat on the *Gadi* for a few minutes to receive homage and then driving home in the motor-car by a quiet road and leaving the procession to take care of itself. When it came back it was much larger, and there were half a dozen native bands besides the military band, all playing together and making a deafening noise; behind the troops came seven of the State elephants in gorgeous trappings but no howdahs, their great golden bells sounding musically above the screeching pipes and roaring drums; and then the *Gadi* itself, a gigantic bolster covered with a large cloth of gold, on a triumphal car beautifully decorated with flowers and drawn by ten milk-white bullocks draped from head to foot with magnificent embroideries.

It was a fine sight and very touching to see the vast crowds throw themselves flat on the ground as the sacred emblem of royalty passed by them.

As soon as we could get away we drove back to the palace, and got there in time to see the procession again as it arrived there, looking rather lonely, as the public were not admitted within the park gates. Her Highness was watching it from a balcony and called out to me to ask if I had had a good view.

The *Gadi* was placed in the small Durbar hall, and offerings were made to it by the Gaekwar,

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assisted by three Brahmins in their official robes of purple cloth, their bare breasts and faces painted with vermilion and their shaven heads bare except for a single lock of hair tied together in a short pigtail at the back.

As it was a religious ceremony I was not allowed to go inside, but watched it from the balcony with Indira, who explained in whispers what was going on. She also told me that she works every morning and afternoon with Sampatrao's daughters at the Maharaja's School, and asked me to go there and have tea with them some afternoon.

They do no work on the Hindu festivals, of which there are eleven, some of them lasting over several days, and keep birthdays and so on as holidays; and in this way they get about thirty days in the year, besides the longer vacations. Sunday is also kept as a holiday, very little work being done by anybody on that day.

At breakfast the Gaekwar proposed that I should have an Indian dress made and dine at the banquet in the evening in Indian fashion. I jumped at the idea, and a message was sent to the tailor, who came to my rooms at two o'clock to measure me and submit patterns; such a funny old man, very tall and thin and extremely deferential.

At seven o'clock Sanka entered beaming, with a fine new dress all quite ready, exactly like the one Maharaja wears. It is quite a pleasure to put on the

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soft, light underclothing, and my only regret was that the beautiful waistcoat of peach-coloured silk with gold embroidery was covered by the long white outer garment, just showing faintly through the fine lawn. However there was a lovely *fetah* to match, about ten yards long, which Sanka wound round my head with great care. When I was ready I went to show myself to the ladies, who were pleased to approve, and then made my way to the banqueting hall, which was looking quite lovely. It is a fine, well-proportioned room, brilliantly lit by crystal chandeliers and with a number of old paintings by famous native artists hanging on the walls, illustrating stories from Hindu mythology. The floor had been specially decorated with a long oblong pattern made with coloured sands and gold and silver dust, and behind this large trays of solid silver were placed, one for each of the fifty guests. Silver bowls filled with flowers were placed between each tray, and sticks of burning incense smoked in slender silver holders. Behind the trays were small squares of inlaid wood, on which we took our seats like so many tailors.

His Highness and Shivajirao sat at the top of the room and dined off trays of gold, with gold flagons, cups and water-bowls. At the other end of the room sat the Brahmins, still in their war-paint, so placed that their own servants could cook their own food on the verandah outside and bring it to them without passing any low-caste person such as myself.





THE TREASURY.

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I found that my tray was divided into a dozen little compartments, each containing a different kind of food, and the servants went busily about replenishing them from larger dishes. The food was excellent, and I was able to enjoy it, as I had been provided with spoon and fork, all the others using their fingers. Half-way through dinner Mr. Pluck brought me the wing of a partridge with cauliflower and salad, so I did very well. The conversation was of a general kind, the Gaekwar talking first to one then to another of his guests, and there were many jokes and much laughter. My legs ached frightfully towards the end, but I managed to sit through it all right, being an object of much polite curiosity, especially to the Brahmins, whose shrewd eyes I often found fixed upon me.

The meal ended with the customary ablutions, the number of antique silver vessels used again recalling the days of Solomon, and was followed by an open-air concert by native singers and dancers, after which we went on to the terrace to watch the display of fireworks. It was quite magnificent, beautiful effects being produced by the reflection in the waters of the lake, the illuminated fountains, and the Bengal lights burning in the background among the trees.

The next morning I drove with the Gaekwar to the treasury, and watched him doing *pooja*, or worship, to the State jewels, which were all spread out on

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cushions, a blaze of barbaric splendour. We worship our wealth in a different way in England, but I think that their way is better; it is certainly more dignified and honest. Later in the day Shivajirao went through a similiar ceremony at the palace with the family jewels, which are almost as numerous and magnificent as those in the State collection.

In the afternoon there was a large garden-party down by the cricket-ground to which all the English people and native officials were invited to meet the Maharana of Lunawada. It was a very gay scene, a pageant of moving colour; the tennis-courts were full, and a number of English and Indian ladies were playing croquet. The acrobats gave a performance, and three great elephants in full dress took parties of the guests for a ride round the park. The band played lively tunes, and at intervals a company of pipers in Highland uniforms marched about at some distance, playing Scottish airs on their bagpipes.

Of all the British customs introduced by the Gaekwar, I think the pipers are the most successful. They are much better than the band, which is not quite up to the mark, probably because the music appeals to them more. Ices and other delicious refreshments were served in a marquee and several other smaller tents gay with flags, and as it grew dark the trees were illuminated with coloured lights and Japanese lanterns.

At dinner Maharaja asked me if I would like to go

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with him to Bombay that evening and see the illuminations there, and orders were sent to Sanka to get my luggage ready. We spent the evening in the Maharani's drawing-room, listening to a performance on stringed instruments by three men who are evidently great artists. I had not realized before what Indian music could be; it was indescribably beautiful, plaintive melodies, so soft as to be at times almost inaudible, floating above a gentle murmur of chromatic accompaniment. Quarter-tones were freely used, and probably other still smaller intervals which my ear, trained only to our Western scales, failed to detect.

Guzerat is famous for its musical instruments of every shape and size, fashioned by the most skilful workmanship from rare woods beautifully inlaid. One of the finest was made of two large gourd-shaped sounding-boards joined by a long neck, along which are stretched on pegs of ivory and ebony some fifteen strings of catgut, and under these again a number of other strings of gold and silver wire, from which the most wonderful harmonic effects can be obtained.

The performers were all handsome, dignified men, evidently taking great pride in their art, and their grave faces were lit up with smiles of pleasure at my enthusiastic admiration. One of them sang several songs; he had a fine voice, but the Hindu method of voice-production is too nasal to please me, and they

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throw their heads about and contort their faces too much.

Maharani asked them if they could accompany me in a song, and they said they thought they could if they heard it first; so I sang "Pale Hands I loved," from Mrs. Woodforde-Finden's "Lover in Damascus"; they listened very attentively and then with great skill improvized an accompaniment while I sang it again, and the principal performer continued to extemporize a fantasia on it for some time.

It was a delightful evening, and we were sorry when we heard that the car was waiting to take Maharaja and myself to the train. We drove across the park to the private station, the whole way being lit up by torches held by men standing at intervals of a few yards, evidently a survival from old times, as our own powerful lights would have been quite enough. The station also was lit by torches and the platform covered with a carpet on which chairs were placed. Presently the train came in with the Gaekwar's saloon attached to it, into which we mounted by a flight of portable steps covered with red baize. It was not the mail, but the slow train for third-class passengers only, so that we might have a longer night and have plenty of time to dress. The saloon was very roomy and comfortable, divided into two large compartments, one for His Highness and the other for his suite, with a couple of bathrooms and a kitchen for the servants. The

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furniture of the saloon is very handsome and comfortable, the walls being wainscoted with carved and gilded woodwork in which several mirrors are set, and it is fitted with electric light and fans.

Maharaja asked me to share his compartment with him, but as I thought he would probably prefer to be alone, I told him that Nimbalker had already had my bed made up next door with Dr. Jadhav and himself, at which he did not seem displeased. I chatted with him while he was being undressed and then joined my two friends, the rest of the suite being in a first-class coach tacked on behind the train. We had a light supper and a cigar and then went to bed, the little doctor looking very comical without his *puggari*, and slept soundly till we reached Bombay.

We had our *chota hazri* in the train, and were met by some of the directors of the Bombay and Baroda Railway, with whom we went to inspect the plans of a new saloon they are building for His Highness, which will run on either the broad or the narrow gauge. Cornalbas, the chauffeur, was waiting for us outside the station with one of several new motor-cars which we tried during the day, and we drove to the Taj Mahal hotel for baths and breakfast.

I spent the morning driving about with the Gaekwar to various horse-dealers' stables. Faye wants some new carriage-horses and had come up a day or two before to select some for His Highness' approval,

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so we had a delightful time. I have never seen so many horses before in my life, and got frightfully mixed, but the Maharaja's experienced eye soon picked out the cream; of course they wanted ridiculous prices for them, but Faye was left to do the bargaining and was no doubt equal to the occasion.

You have probably often heard me speak of Jimmy Palmer, who was up with me at Oxford, where he was a great friend of all the Winchester men. He is now Bishop of Bombay, and Robert Brinton is his chaplain. With one of my contemporaries a bishop and another a headmaster, I really must be looking out for my deanery!

I went to lunch with them in a delightful bungalow on Khamballa Hill, and found them looking so well and happy; the bishop dressed in a long white cassock with pectoral cross, very keen on his new work, and applying himself, as befits a Fellow of Balliol, to the study of Sanscrit and Mahratti; Brinton, as energetic in the slums of Bombay as he was in those of Portsea, and with all the latest news from his people at home. It was so good to see them both again and compare notes.

The Bishop said that he was not going to have me in his diocese without making use of me, so after lunch we drove down to the Cathedral, where he licensed me to officiate as a Missionary Priest, the last thing in the world I ever thought I should be; now I shall be able to help them in the English

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Church at Baroda, which the Chaplain is only able to visit once a month.

After leaving them I picked up Sanka and went to see the markets, docks and bazaars of Bombay, the second city in the Empire, which was ceded to England by Portugal in the time of Charles II. as part of the dowry of Catherine of Braganza. On the way back the wily Sanka contrived that we should pass by the house of a friend of his, his "guardian," with whom he lived for three years when he was being educated here. He suggested that we should go in to see him, and when I heard that he was the Gaekwar's "pleader," or agent, I agreed. We found the old fellow sitting cross-legged on the floor with a friend, with cards spread out between them, "playing Bridges, as it is our holiday" as he explained. He talked very volubly and it was with some difficulty that I managed to get away. It transpired that Sanka had been having a square meal in the back room, from which he reluctantly emerged looking very replete.

Then I had tea myself at a very good confectioner's, and afterwards drove round by the public buildings, which are very fine. The city owes not a little to the munificence of the rulers of Baroda, as a former Maharaja, Khande Rao Gaekwar gave the beautiful statue of Queen Victoria by Noble, and built the Royal Alfred Sailors' Home, which has accommodation for a hundred inmates, in honour of the visit of the

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Duke of Edinburgh, who laid the foundation-stone in 1870. The total cost was twenty-five thousand pounds.

As we were to spend the night at the Gaekwar's bungalow on Malabar Hill, we drove there along the Queen's Road, a beautiful avenue by the seashore, along which all the beauty and fashion of Bombay turn out in the evening. It was full of smart carriages and horses and there were many natives on the beach washing and praying, while one large party had come down to cast the ashes of a dead friend into the sea.

I noticed several Englishmen sitting on the benches, gazing wistfully over the sea at the sun setting in the West to which they were longing to return. All round me there are people who would give almost anything to return home; while I am dreading the time of departure.

A long pull up hill brought us to the bungalow, a most comfortable house with large, airy rooms and wide balconies commanding a lovely view of the sea, which is so near that you could almost throw a stone into it from the garden as it laps gently among the rocks covered with seaweed at the foot of the hill. Everything here is as perfect as it is in Baroda: the house is lit by a private installation of electricity and is delightfully cool, the sea-breezes being delicious. They had given me a fine, large bedroom with a bathroom opening out of it.

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Maharaja had enjoyed his day and was in great spirits, and we had an excellent dinner sent up from a restaurant the proprietor of which wants to get his custom and came up himself to see that it was well served.

Shortly afterwards we went out again in the car to see the illuminations. They were very fine, especially in the Bhendi bazaar, where the streets were so full of people that it was all we could do to crawl along. I did not see a single motor out except our own, so that we were the objects of a good deal of attention, for which I was not sorry, as I could have a good look at them in return. And what a sight it was!

“Nowhere could be seen a play of livelier hues, a busier and brighter city life. Besides the endless crowds of Hindu, Guzerati and Mahratta people coming and going—some with gay dresses, but most with next to none at all—between rows of grotesquely painted houses and temples, there are to be studied here specimens of every race and nation of the East; Arabs from Muscat, Persians from the Gulf, Afghans from the northern frontier, black, shaggy Beluchis, negroes of Zanzibar, islanders from the Maldives and Laccadives, Malagashes, Malays and Chinese throng and jostle with Parsis in their sloping hats, with Jews, Lascars, fishermen Rajpoots, Fakirs, Europeans, Sepoys and Sahibs.” These are Sir Edwin Arnold’s words, not mine, but I must indulge myself with a quotation now and then, and although I

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probably should not know a Malagash if I saw one, most of the others were very much in evidence, and many more besides.

On the way back we had to stop to let a child-wedding pass, a very grand and noisy affair with two bands, one playing English the other native airs, and a long torchlight procession. We did not see much of the bride, who was carried past in a large silver box slung on staves, but we saw the bridesmaids, twelve little tots of her own age, three or four years old, toddling along behind, followed by a woman bearing sundry mystic articles on a tray, and the bridegroom, a boy of ten, gorgeously arrayed and looking very pleased with himself and the big sword he was carrying.

You could not see such a sight in Baroda, as the Gaekwar is strongly opposed to child-marriages and has made a law fixing the minimum age at twelve, a measure which they have not ventured to enforce in the British territories.

We spent the next morning in the new palace which is being built for the Gaekwar a few yards away from his bungalow. It is a magnificent building of white stone, enriched with rare marbles, mosaics and carved woodwork. The actual edifice is now finished, and skilled workmen from all parts of India are busy painting and decorating the rooms, while outside an army of labourers are levelling the ground for the gardens and sawing stone for the terraces.

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The bungalow was full of plans for the furniture, designs for stained-glass windows and rich and beautiful stuffs for carpets and curtains. At the back, hidden by a grove of palm-trees, are the stables and machine-houses for electricity.

It is one of the finest buildings in Bombay and has already cost over a million pounds, and by the time it is completed half as much again will have been spent upon it. Even the Gaekwar seems rather unwilling to think of the bill. I asked him what he was going to call it, and he said that the "White Elephant" would be rather a good name.

The original estimate had to be largely increased, as the ground in front is so steep as to make it rather risky for cars, and he had to buy practically the whole hill to get another way of approach. The new drive, through a rocky dell covered with palms and watered by a rivulet such as one sees in a Devonshire coomb, will be very lovely. The Maharaja himself seems quite content with his bungalow, which will in future be occupied by his suite, and not very keen about the new palace; but the Maharani persuaded him to build it, as there is at present hardly sufficient accommodation for her when she visits Bombay, and his own natural taste for bricks and mortar inclined him to yield to her wishes.

In the afternoon I was fortunate enough to get a permit to visit the Towers of Silence, where the rich and poor of the Parsi race meet in death. The

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massive grey towers looked very impressive in the midst of the thick woods, and that is all that I will say about them, as you are not fond of gruesome subjects and it is all written in the guide books.

I sat for some time under the shady trees in a beautiful flower garden; a cool breeze was blowing from the sea, and the view over the waters of the islands in the harbour and the distant mountains beyond was enchanting.

After tea the Maharaja drove me down the Queen's Road to the Apollo Bandar, telling me the names of the various people who passed us in their carriages; among them were the Maharajas of Kolhapur and Bhaunagar and the Maharani of Kapurthala, a very beautiful Spanish lady who was dancing in Paris when she met with her husband.

There was an amusing incident at dinner. The Gaekwar had said that he should like to have crab; when the fish appeared it was certainly not crab; we each took a mouthful and then disappeared simultaneously through different doors! When we had washed out our mouths the chef was sent for to be reprimanded. He presented a lamentable figure of despair:—"I have sought ze crab, but I could not catch him; zen I have commanded ze lobstaire, but he is not; I have been in motor-car and on bicycle; I have sent telegrams, but in vain." We tried to explain that the grievance was not the absence of the crab, but the badness of the fish; but this he would

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not admit until His Highness said that if he was so sure it was good he had better eat it himself, when he wept silently.

We left Bombay at ten o'clock, and after a good night in the train I was riding with Shivajirao in Baroda early the next morning. In the afternoon we went out together again, but this time on an elephant with a peacock saddle (solid gold, of course; you must learn to take that for granted) to seat three. He held on to the peacock's head, I put my arms round his waist, and Turnbull hung on to me. It was very amusing, and got rather too exciting when Shivajirao made the *mahout* put the elephant at top speed; the way he covered the ground was extraordinary.

After dinner we had domestic fireworks, letting them off ourselves in front of the Maharani's apartments while she watched us from the balcony. The Gaekwar let off a few, and then got tired of it and sat down on the steps. Sampatrao was in great form, shouting with excitement and nearly blowing all our heads off; but the person who enjoyed it most of all was Indira, who looked like the Queen of the Serpents as she valed gracefully round wreathing herself in great circles of fire. It was so fascinating to watch her that I quite forgot my own part in the game and the Maharani kept calling to me not to be lazy. Besides, I was rather afraid that she might set fire to her flimsy draperies, and on the alert to win eternal

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praise and glory by putting her out. Luckily my devotion was not put to the proof, though she told me the next day that her *sari* had holes burnt in it in several places, and was quite spoilt. The explosion of a huge bomb, prepared by Sampatrao as a surprise, brought a very jolly evening to its close.

So ended the Diwali Festival. I have enjoyed every moment of it thoroughly and hope that another Hindu holiday will come round soon. If they are all as merry as this one I shall end by making a bonfire of the Bishop's licence and becoming a Brahmin myself.

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THE "Missionary" duties laid upon me by the good Bishop are of the lightest kind, but I am grateful for them as serving to keep my thoughts in orthodox channels and save me from becoming a devotee of Vishnu or Siva. They consist of a service on Sunday evenings, held at seven o'clock in the English Church. Gladly would I afford my congregation more opportunities for public worship, but they will have none of them.

They have for so long been accustomed to keeping one Sunday only in the month that a service on each of the four seems an act of extraordinary piety, and, like many of our friends in the country at home, they have a holy horror of works of supererogation. Nor can I honestly say that this grieves me much.

Sunday has for so many years been to me a day of ceaseless toil and hard labour that it looks very attractive in its new guise of a domestic festival. One day in seven my kind friends are all free—Maharaja from his "shop," Maharani from her social duties, Indira and Shivajirao from their books—and able to devote themselves to *Shikar*, a word as dear to the

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native as to the English ear, signifying the pursuit of game. While it is still dark, lights begin to twinkle and there is an unusual stir and bustle in the palace. Down below is the head Shikari, surrounded by a group of wild looking under-keepers, who have come hot-foot from the country with news of the movements of the game.

Sanka's voice is very joyful as he bids me good morning; either he will come with us and take part in the fun or else he will spend the day with his wife and children, and both occupations are to his taste. When I reach the hall, Sampatrao and Kaka are already there and presently Turnbull comes cantering up, throws his horse's reins to the syce and joins us. Three cars come humming up, and at last we are all ready and pack ourselves into them. As we spin down the drive, past the guard-house, the guard turns out to present arms, and the drums and fifes play the Baroda anthem; the city as we drive through it is fast asleep, the people, wrapped in blankets on the floor of their shops, looking like a museum of mummies.

When we reach the *rendezvous*, where the country lane begins which we are to follow, we pay our respects to their Highnesses. Maharaja and Indira are wearing smart shooting suits, but Her Highness is faithful to her Indian dress, and I have never seen her in anything else. As nothing could possibly be more becoming to her, she is wise, and she tells me that

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there is no other dress which gives such freedom to the limbs.

Tongas (light carriages strongly built for the deep ruts of the country roads), each drawn by a pair of horses, are waiting, and we distribute ourselves among them, though Indira and I usually prefer to ride and spare ourselves the jolting which the others are sure to get. In half an hour we reach the first halting place, a large tank near a small village, and take our places round the bank under any cover we can find.

The water is covered with wild duck, but they are wily and will not move until they are disturbed by the villagers wading and swimming in the water, when they rise in a great cloud and circle overhead. For the next hour the guns crack merrily, and then the duck give it up as a bad job and go elsewhere, while we mount again and ride off to another village, where there is a still larger tank; here there are boats, in which we are rowed about after the game and have plenty of sport.

By this time we have all first-rate appetites and are glad to see preparations for breakfast going on on the bank. The food is Indian, lovely stuff, with English drinks, and we eat it either in picnic fashion or else at long wooden tables set on trestles on the bank of the lake. The game is spread out before us, and we find that we have done a good morning's work, chief honours falling to the Maharani, who is said to be the first shot among the ladies of India, so

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many of whom can shoot well. In reply to my compliments, she said very simply that all her family are good shots and that one of her nieces, ten years of age, has already shot a tiger, a bison and a quantity of small game.

While we were talking, a flock of herons passed overhead; the Maharani called to her shikari for her gun, and, seated as she was at the table, brought down two of them with unerring aim. She very seldom misses, and if by chance she wings a bird she generally asks me to give it the *coup de grâce*, so that I may say that I have added something to the bag!

After breakfast we all rest for an hour, Shivajirao taking me off to a shooting-box close by, where he has had our bedding brought from Baroda, a refinement of luxury of which I should not have thought. Then a message is brought that there is a herd of black-buck not far away, and we go after them.

Her Highness has mounted a horse, which she rides astride, carrying an umbrella over her head, as it is still very hot. Maharaja, like myself, wears a topè, or sun-helmet, or two Homburg hats fitting one over the other, a combination peculiar to India and called a *Tarai* hat. It requires a good deal of patience to get within rifle range, but at last a buck falls to Maharaja's rifle, and Her Highness secures another later on.

If I am to get back in time for service, I must now be going, as Slowcoach has had almost as much

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as he cares about and will want to take things easily ; so off we go, with a groom who knows the country well and can be trusted to find the shortest way home, and who has enough English to make him an amusing companion.

There are several of these fellows, who are hardly ever out of the saddle and are beautiful horsemen. Until Faye came they had it all their own way in the stables, and I expect he has a hard job to keep them in order. Luckily, they have all taken a great fancy to me and don't seem to mind how much trouble they take on my account, probably because I am so fond of the horses, who like me in their turn because I am such a light weight and ride them with a very light rein. Slowcoach is now quite devoted to me, and will follow me about like a dog, trying to poke his nose into my pockets.

The horses are keen to get home and we get back in good time, and after a cup of tea and a leisurely change of raiment, I drive down in the carriage which is always at my disposal, though I seldom want it, to the church, giving Indira's little English maid a lift in the hope that she will give her mistress a good account of my sermon afterwards.

Mrs. Burrows, the Maharani's maid, is a Roman Catholic, and goes to her own chapel. She is a very old and loyal ally of mine, and is a most useful friend to have at court. We drive across the public park to the cantonment which is British territory, and is

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well laid out with good roads and avenues of trees. In it is the Residency, the camp of the native regiment, and the officers' quarters and mess-room. There is a good deal of it, marked out by white stone pillars, with golf links and a large parade-ground on which they play polo. Overlooking this are most of the officers' bungalows with the church at the end. It all looks very pretty and as green as anything can look in India. Across it winds a ribbon of variegated colour, the converts of the American mission walking two and two from their settlement to the large tabernacle of red brick, in which a noisy bell is clanging; and the inhabitants of the small native bazaar which supplies the soldiers' wants have the edifying spectacle of the members of the one and undivided Catholic Church marching as to war in three opposite directions and turning up their noses as they pass one another; not to speak of the Gallios who are playing bridge and drinking whisky-pegs at the Gymkhana.

Is it really impossible, at least in India, to oppose an undivided front to the enemy? True, there seem to be as many "unhappy divisions" among the religions of this land as there are in ours, but I should like to see those first in the field left to play out their innings undisturbed. This, however, is rank heresy, of which I am not yet sufficiently enamoured to go to the stake for it, so I go on to the church, resisting the blandishments of the old Parsi dealer

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seated among his cigar-boxes and whisky bottles, and Nimbalker's invitation to join him in his garden, where he reclines at ease listening to the gramophone which has captivated the Indian heart.

Outside the church the faithful are chatting in groups, staying out in the open air till the last possible moment, and their carriages are drawn up in line on the grass under the trees.

Presently the Resident, the *Burra Sahib*, or "big lord," drives up with a small escort, with Mrs. Meade and their two sons; O'Brien, the *Chota Sahib*, or Assistant-Resident, is there with his wife, a tall, strong man and a great athlete, looking ten years under his age in spite of seventeen years spent in this climate; Major Burton, sportsman and author, who commands the regiment, and Mrs. Burton, whom I met at home just before she came out; Maloney, the jolly Irish doctor with his bride; and a good muster of subalterns, bright, clean, brave English lads, with perfect manners and imperturbable good-humour, who love to shout out the old familiar hymn tunes.

Then I go inside, to see that every possible window is open, that no unnecessary lamps are lit and that none of the *punkah-wallahs* is asleep; the beaming native clerk helps me into my robes in the vestry and goes out to stop the bell, and we begin. Mrs. Evans-Gordon presides at the organ, and her twin daughters, Jean and Joan, dear girls of the same age as Indira, with whom they have struck up a great

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friendship, lead the singing, to which the General contributes a melodious tenor. The Resident reads the lessons and comes into the vestry afterwards to count the collection, and when we get outside again everyone has a cheery word of thanks, "Awfully good of you, Padre, to come and give us a show." When the Burra Padre is here, they put him up for as long as he can stay, and the Chota Padre (little me) is overwhelmed with invitations to dinner, or supper, and returns home with the palatial milk, after a delightful feast of yarns in the mess-room or music in the drawing-room.

Whatever he may be like in other parts of India, the Englishman in Baroda is a charming person, and, in spite of what one sometimes hears to the contrary, I like to believe that he is typical of his kind. The temptation to spend one's time with him is very great, but I manage to resist it, and, except on Sundays, I seldom go to the camp, unless Maharaja or Shivajirao are going there, which they do once or twice a week.

The Maharaja and the Resident hit it off very well together; the Gaekwar likes a game of tennis on the colonel's grass court, which is not so fast as our own, and they sometimes play golf together. The Residency is a large house, with cool, spacious rooms and a beautiful garden, in which is a large banyan tree, where two cobras have their home, though I have not yet seen them. It is only a few minutes' walk

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from the Gymkhana, and when they have finished their tennis they walk across there for a game of bridge. At present, the only non-English members are the Maharaja, his sons and brothers, but it will soon open its doors to some of the more important native officials, in recognition of His Highness' munificence in providing the new pavilion which is being built.

There are two good gravel tennis-courts, a racquet-court, and one for badminton, which is a very popular game with the ladies. Shivajirao is always a welcome guest at the Gymkhana on account of his skill at tennis, and he and O'Brien have great battles. As soon as it gets dark, swinging lamps are brought out, under which the bridge-tables are set and four or five rubbers are soon in progress, the scores being entered in a book and settled in the monthly chits. A *chit*, by the way, is one of the most useful Anglo-Indian words, and means a note of any kind, from an invitation to dinner, to a tradesman's bill; on board ship, when you order anything, instead of paying for it you sign a chit. Out here, each bungalow has its mounted messenger to carry chits from house to house; he wears a red uniform and is provided with a book to be signed on delivery.

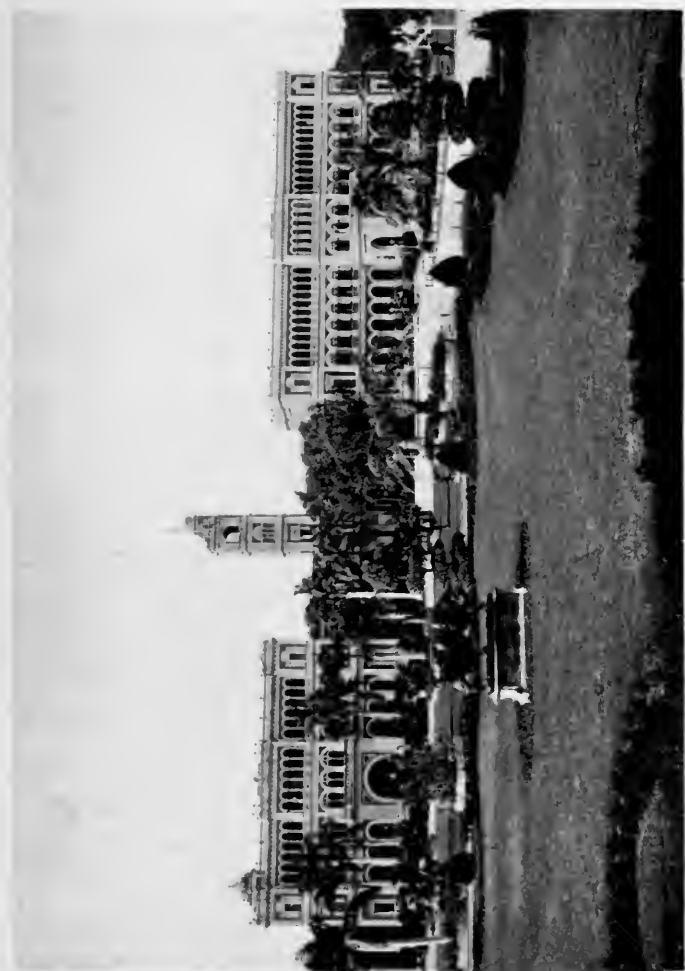
Sometimes there is polo in the afternoon, at which Shivajirao has a great advantage, on account of the number of beautiful polo-ponies that he has; they are always fresh and keen, and though the game only

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lasts about half an hour, it gives both men and horses plenty of work. Chairs are placed under the trees for the spectators, and most of the ladies turn out to watch. When the game is over, if it is a band night, we go on to the Gymkhana for bridge, but generally I mount one of Shivajirao's spare ponies and we go for a ride together, which is far jollier—a "mounted Lapait" as he calls it. Bridge is a fascinating game, but it cannot compare with the delights of the "Lapait Club," and any evening that it does not meet seems an evening wasted.

You will remember that among the statues in the hall of the palace is one of a *shikari* holding two cheetahs in leash. The cheetah is a kind of leopard, and hunting with them was at one time a favourite sport in India; but they are now growing very scarce, and only a few of the Maharajas keep them. Yesterday the Gaekwar, who is anxious that I should miss nothing that is worth seeing, had a cheetah-hunt arranged for me, and asked Sampatrao to go with me. We made an early start, and drove to the Makarpura Palace, another of the Gaekwar's many beautiful homes, which is four miles out of Baroda. There is a very good road to it, with an open conduit of water running beside it, so that it can be kept well watered, and grass rides on either side.

We stopped on the way that I might see how they catch quail: a large net, with wings something like a cricket-net had been put up and when we arrived on



MAKARPURA PALACE.

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the scene they placed several cages of captive birds behind it. Just before the sun rose these birds began to sing very loudly, and a large flock of wild quail, attracted by the sound, came flying up and were entangled in the net, and we ran up from the bushes, where we had been hidden, and caught several dozen of them.

When we reached Makarpura, we exchanged our carriage for a tonga with a pair of horses, and drove through the country lanes to a village some five miles further on. Here the cheetah was waiting for us, pacing impatiently about at the end of his tether, a beautiful sleek animal and so tame that I went up and patted him, and he licked my hand with a tongue as rough as a file. Three bullock-carts were waiting, one for us, one for the cheetah, and one for "drink-water and all that," as Sampatrao, who was getting rather excited, put it. The cheetah's head was hooded and we set off; by special request I sat next to the driver with my legs swinging in front, almost touching those of the bullocks. Sampatrao called out: "Don't get too close or they will kick you," which was pleasant; however, they seemed quiet and sleepy enough and wandered slowly along, in spite of the frequent prodding which the driver gave them with a sharp stick in the region of their tails. A camel came stalking along behind us to carry the "bag," followed by three men on horseback, fifteen of us altogether.

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There were several herds of black buck about, and when we had chosen one we followed them slowly over the cotton fields; at first they were very shy and we had some trouble to get near them, but gradually they began to think that we were harmless peasants engaged in agricultural pursuits and got more careless. As I wanted to see as much of my friend the cheetah as possible, I changed on to the cart where he was; it was so strange to feel his hide brushing against my hand and his tail curling round my neck now and then. At last we got within about thirty yards of the herd; the hood was removed from the cheetah's eyes, the leash slipped, and he was off, clearing the ground with easy, swinging, noiseless bounds. As soon as they were aware of his approach they made off at great speed, but the cheetah was too swift for them: going like lightning, he picked out the biggest buck in the herd, and soon caught him up. Then with a mighty spring he caught him a tremendous blow on the flank, breaking his bones, and fixed his teeth in his throat, strangling him.

We all ran up, and the huntsman hauled him off with some difficulty, as he had now become very fierce. When they had at last secured him, we set off again after another herd, and the same performance was gone through again. When he had killed the second buck, he was allowed to feed on the blood for some time and was then dragged back to

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the cart, where one of the men brought him spoonfuls of the liver and so on, a horrid sight, while the huntsman flayed the buck and strapped the carcase on to the camel, which had now come up with the first one.

On the way back we hunted with a kind of lynx, which they call by its Persian name of Shiah Gosh, such a funny-looking little chap with long, pointed ears: it is very good at catching a large bird something like a crow, walking very quietly up to it, and then leaping quickly upon it just as it is trying to fly away.

When we reached the village, the headman came up with a small deputation to beg that the tank might be cleaned out: he was very eloquent and ended by snatching his puggari from his head, a sign of the most earnest entreaty. Sampatrao, very pleased at being appealed to, returned evasive answers in light and airy tones. Of course, I could not understand, but "probably—we shall see—perhaps His Highness," seemed to be about the gist of it.

Meanwhile, it had grown pretty hot and we had made several raids on the cart with the "drink-water and all that." It was nice to get back to the Makarpura Palace and have a bath in a lovely modern bath-room, fitted with every kind of shower, douche and spray, and to sit down to a capital lunch which had been prepared for us, part of it consisting of some of the quail which we had caught in the

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morning. I went over the palace and suggested going through the gardens, which are said to be very beautiful, but Sampatrao was in a hurry to get home and said that we should probably be coming to stay here before long, so you must wait till then, when you shall have a full description.

To my great joy I see a good deal of Indira nowadays in one way or another. Sometimes we ride together in the morning; Hingujirao, the chief officer of Her Highness' household, always comes with us, but rides at a discreet distance behind with the groom, so that we can chat undisturbed. On these days I ride my Arab horse Dilrubah, as he makes a braver show than Slowcoach, and she admires him very much. Maharaja has just given her a new horse and we were much exercised to find a name for him, finally choosing Vijya, which means Victory. Sometimes we pick up the Gordon girls and go for a scamper round the race-course, a very merry party.

Hingujirao is such a nice old fellow, quite bald, rather stout and awfully good-natured. He has some false front teeth and a trick of moving them about with his tongue in a comical way which makes us all laugh. He takes life very easily, and has a great dislike of anything which gives him the smallest trouble, being in this respect not unlike Dr. Jadhav; so he is quite delighted when I come and take Indira off his hands for a bit.

On mornings when Maharaja is reading political



Photo by]

THREE LITTLE MAIDS FROM SCHOOL.

[R. W. Turnbull, Esq.

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economy with Turnbull, I stroll down to the school, where Indira is working in the verandah with her tutor Fardesai, another most amiable person, very clever, quick and intelligent. We discuss the subject of her next essay and Fardesai is sent off to the library for a book which will clear up some disputed point, and as the library is a large one and the books not very well arranged, it takes him some time to find it.

Tea in the schoolroom when work is done is a very pleasant meal; Sampatrao's two daughters are there, but they are very shy and silent, and Indira and I have to do most of the talking. It is delightful to hear her fresh and original thoughts, wittily expressed, on things which interest her, and they are legion, for the great mystery of life, with all its treasures, new and old, is spread out before her and she plunges into it with all the enthusiasm of youth.

After tea we play badminton, a game which displays the graceful outlines of her figure and the charming folds of her dress to the greatest advantage, or wander through the gardens looking for flowers. In her bedroom she has a "little idol which Mother gave me." She used to pray to it, "Oh! let me go to England," and as her prayer was granted she looks to it for help in all her wishes, and only the very choicest flowers are good enough to offer to it: but you must be very careful not to smell them first or you will defile them.

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Before dinner we sometimes get half an hour together at the piano, and I have just written a new valse for her, in which I have tried to express something of the rhythmic beauty which glorifies her every movement. Above and beyond all her many accomplishments, she is one of the sweetest girls, very gentle and nice-minded, happy and contented. He will be a lucky man who wins her, for she has not her peer among the women of India, and I know of very few outside India who can be named in comparison with her.

One morning, Maharani sent for me and took me over all her rooms, but I cannot hope to describe them to you: words fail me to tell of the multitude of instruments for the toilet in ivory and gold spread on the lace coverings of the dressing tables, in graceful order before the large crystal mirrors; of wardrobes piled with hundreds of *saris*, wrought by cunning hands out of the most costly and dazzling materials; of drawers filled with the finest lace from Brussels and from Ireland (she confessed to being rather extravagant in the matter of lace); of jewels sparkling in golden dressing-cases; of walls hung with priceless tapestries; of bedsteads and furniture of gold and silver, covered with magnificent brocades; of slippers and shawls and rugs and curtains that are miracles of the embroiderer's art.

Everything was there which an exquisite taste could imagine and unlimited wealth command. What

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interested me more than all these things was the case of lace handkerchiefs which Indira has worked with her monogram for a birthday gift. What will interest and please you most was the large Japanese tapestry which belonged to your dear friend, Denis Newman, which his mother sent to the Maharani after his sad death out here, and which Her Highness has hung in the place of honour in her own favourite room and values as the greatest of all her treasures.

It was all too fascinating, and I only tore myself away with great reluctance when a message came from Maharaja that he was waiting for me to come to breakfast. Before I left, Maharani gave me some of her favourite scent and some special sticks of incense to burn in my room. The Indian scents are much stronger than ours, but have a delicious aroma : they are often made up in the form of a paint, which can be applied as a caste-mark to the forehead or tucked away within a fold of the ear.

As I was leaving Her Highness' apartments after my first visit to them, I saw a little creature in the corridor, dressed in a bright costume, who came towards me and then was seized with a fit of shyness and ran away. I thought it was a girl, but it turned out to be a little orphan boy who was found by the Maharani wandering destitute about the streets in Poona. She took compassion on him and adopted him, and he now has the run of the palace and is being educated. He has a great affection for me and

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follows me about like a dog, gliding into my room when I am reading in the afternoon and sitting at my feet. It is amusing to teach him English by means of signs, and he can now say, "Eye, nose, mouth, e-arr, cheek, chin, tooth, teeth, tongue," touching each of these features as he names them.

When he has finished his lesson, I reward him with dainties from my tea-table, which he eats with great composure. The other day he had his head shaven quite close, which made him look the funniest little object; so I taught him to say, "I am a bald boy," and sent him running off to repeat it to the Maharani. Shivajirao has dubbed him my A B C.

Maharaja has been up to Bombay to spend a few days with Sir George Clarke, at Government House, and has come back very pleased with his visit and singing high praises of Miss Clarke, who has just come out from home. According to him, she is a handsome, charming girl, and a paragon of wit and learning. They have been talking Herbert Spencer, Swinburne and Rossetti together by the hour, so she has evidently not been slow to find out in which direction his tastes lie. He has asked the Government House party to come and spend Christmas here, but it is not yet certain if they will be able to come.

One evening, while he was away, I was with Shivajirao up in his rooms helping him to arrange the athletic prizes which he won at the Deccan College,

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at Poona; we went out on to the balcony and were rewarded by one of the most charming sights in the world.

Down below on the terrace over the Zenana Porch, in the light of the brilliant moon and of shaded electric lamps, the Maharani was sitting on a heap of cushions working at a frame of embroidery; two of her women stood behind her waving large fans of ostrich plumes, and at her feet Indira was reading aloud from some book to which her cousins were listening, while strains of soft music floated on the air from the stringed instruments of three Mohammedan players seated at a respectful distance and absorbed in their art. The deft movements of the performers, the languorous graceful attitudes of the listening ladies, the warm splashes of colour from their silken robes gleaming beneath the lamps, the dim background of marble trellis-work of pinnacle and dome bathed in the cool light, formed a scene from fairy-land, a picture in which the skill of Leighton and of Alma-Tadema seemed mingled together to weave a magical web of beauty, upon which I gazed spell-bound, until at length, smitten with sudden shame at playing the spy upon such a holy scene of peaceful happiness, I forced myself to cheat my reverent eyes of further delight in the vision.

Christmas has come and gone; you would naturally think that it is a festival not much observed in Indian courts, but it is years since I have spent such a gay

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one. At the last moment, Sir George Clarke was detained in Bombay by urgent affairs, but his daughter came, accompanied by Sir George Warrender, who is in command of the Indian Squadron, and his wife Lady Maud. No pains were spared to give them an impressive reception and to make their visit enjoyable, and it was evident that they enjoyed every moment of it; they came for a week and at the end of ten days they would have been only too delighted to gratify the Maharaja's desire that their visit should be still further prolonged, but their engagements elsewhere made it impossible.

Shivajirao gave up his rooms to Miss Clarke, and Sir George and Lady Maud had mine, while I accepted the most kind hospitality of the Evans-Gordons, who insisted that I should come and go just as I pleased. Turnbull was installed at the palace as Master of the Ceremonies, and carried out his duties to perfection, ransacking the library and the gardens to make the rooms of our guests even more beautiful and comfortable than they were before, and drawing up a delightful programme of sight-seeing and sport, festivity and amusement. They hunted with cheetahs, shot duck and antelope, took part in a golf competition and a tennis tournament, rode on elephants and camels, witnessed native plays and entertainments and generally had a good time. Nor was the more serious business of life forgotten.

While entertaining him in Bombay, Miss Clarke had



Photo by]

MISS CLARKE.

[Bourne & Shepherd.



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become an ardent admirer of the Gaekwar and his methods, and the chief object of her visit was that she might see for herself the schemes which he is carrying out for the welfare of his subjects and especially the efforts which he is making to better their condition through education; so that every day there was a visit to the hospital, the gaol, the college or the State schools for boys and girls; and there was not one of the many little schools which His Highness has founded throughout the city for the out-cast and despised which was not gladdened and encouraged by the presence of the Gaekwar and his enthusiastic guest, who delighted in making her friendly sympathy clear to them all and in taking pains that each individual child should receive a pleasant smile or a kind word.

On most evenings there was a dinner party followed by an entertainment. I sat next to Miss Clarke at dinner on the night of her arrival and found her a most delightful companion. I had rather expected a Blue-stocking, and the pretty, delicate looking girl, with her large inquiring blue eyes, full of fun, quick at repartee and thirsting for new sensations, was a pleasant surprise.

We had much in common, our love of music, our delight in the fantastic and humorous side of life, and, above all, our intense admiration of India and devotion to her people. Any shyness and reserve that there may have been at the beginning soon disappeared,

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and we were talking and laughing together as though we had been friends for years.

It was easy to see that Maharani Sahib was a complete revelation to Sir George Warrender; he had no doubt formed his own cut and dried ideas of Indian ladies, and was amazed to find them all upset. "What a woman!" he said to me as we drank our port together, "By Jove, sir, she's wonderful, marvellous. I have never seen anyone like her." After dinner Lady Maud delighted us all by her singing; she has one of those really great contralto voices which take you by storm. I made her a copy of my "Little Boy Blue," which she sang with the greatest tenderness and feeling.

On Christmas Eve we all dined at the Residency and played children's games afterwards, the Gordon twins taking the lead and initiating Maharaja into the mysteries of Blind Man's Buff.

Christmas Day began with a celebration of the Holy Communion at the orthodox hour of eight o'clock, which was well attended. The church was decorated with all the green stuff that could be found, and red and yellow berries as much like holly and mistletoe as possible, and looked very pretty.

When I got outside afterwards I found Shivajirao waiting with the horses; he had planned this as a surprise for me, so that I should not be done out of my ride. When we got home I found the most lovely present from Maharaja, two sets of sleeve-links

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made out of gold mohurs of his own coinage with his image and superscription. Maharani and Indira had also sent me their photographs in beautiful silver frames. Shivajirao gave me a *Gaekwari puggari*, of the royal shape and colour, with a graceful little note to say that I was now one of their family. Dr. Jadhav sent me such a funny little Christmas card, "Greeting" in a border of violets; and Hingujirao a picture postcard of some railway station that I had never heard of.

I was completely overwhelmed by these marks of affection, and Sanka, who was almost as pleased as I was, said: "Their Highnesses and all the royal family love you very much, Sahib." "Yes," I said, "they do; and I can't think what I have done to deserve it." "Oh," he said sweetly, "it is all through your own goodness!"

We all went to lunch at Ajwa, a beautiful artificial lake eighteen miles away, from which Baroda gets its supply of water, brought through steel pipes and filtered at a large purifying station by sand and permanganate of potash. We went out in the cars, passing through the city on the way, and got there very quickly, as the road is straight and good. Boats were ready to take us out on the water, and we got some good shooting. I like the lake very much, as from it you get a lovely view of the only mountain which can be seen from Baroda, rising craggy and steep above the plain: I have not yet been there, but

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it has a great fascination for me, as it is said to be covered with ancient ruins, among which the tigers prowl.

At the end of the lake is a good pavilion, where we had lunch. There are several bedrooms in it, so that the Gaekwar can use it as a shooting-box. In the afternoon we were very lazy, and lay on the bank under the trees, while Sir George reeled off thrilling tales of the sea and Miss Clarke told us a beautiful Hindu love-story.

At seven o'clock we assembled again for Divine Service in the church. The Burra Padre was there and Mrs Evans-Gordon made me take her place at the organ. We had all the dear old Christmas hymns and several carols: it seemed so strange to be singing about the "winter snow" with the punkahs swinging over our heads and the thermometer at eighty in the shade. That is nothing in India; on days when we should be fainting and talking of the dreadful heat-wave if we had them at home, we say here how delightfully cool it is, and clothing which we find insufferably heavy here would there be thought hardly decent.

At half-past eight there was a big banquet in the small Durbar hall, to which all the English colony were bidden: eighty of us sat down to tables arranged in horse-shoe form, the centre being filled with flowering plants with tiny coloured electric globes hidden among their leaves and a great block

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of ice changing at intervals to all the colours of the rainbow.

The dinner, from the turtle-soup to the blazing plum-pudding and mince pies, was excellent, and all India must have been ransacked to procure dainties for it, and down below in the court the string orchestra discoursed sweet music, until at the end the skirling of the pipes was heard and we linked hands round the table and joined in the strains of Auld Lang Syne.

It had been rumoured that a surprise had been prepared after dinner, and when the Gaekwar led the way to the billiard-room we found Mr. Stevenson, the champion player, waiting to play an exhibition match against a Parsi whom he had brought with him. Seats had been so arranged that everyone had a good view, and for an hour or more we sat enthralled while the wizard worked wonders with the balls, playing more for the sake of showing an endless variety of strokes than of piling up long tiresome breaks, and coming to grief at attempts which were almost as marvellous as though they had succeeded.

A display of fireworks took us all out on to the terrace, and when the guests had departed we returned to the billiard-room, where Stevenson showed us a great number of extraordinary tricks and *tours de force*. We had all got so keen on billiards that it was of the greatest interest to us, and Stevenson, who ought to have returned to Bombay

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the next morning, was persuaded to stay for twenty-four hours longer to give Maharaja and Shivajirao some lessons. The next day the Gaekwar, who loves a joke, put up a purse of five hundred rupees to be played for between the champion and Morenas. Morenas, of course, had a good start and looked at first as though he might win, but he got so nervous and excited that he lost the use of his legs and had to lie on the sofa and have them massaged before he could go on. It was the funniest sight you ever saw, and made us laugh till the tears rolled down.

He was so mortified at his defeat that he challenged Stevenson to another game for a hundred rupees a side, but before it was over he became completely paralysed and had to be carried away. He was all right again the next day and Stevenson very good-naturedly refused to take his money, so no harm was done, and he now laughs as heartily as anyone at his discomfiture. He is such a pleasant little man and really a capital player in his calmer moments, and I can sympathize with him because I often get so nervous myself. The marker of the woeful countenance had a new uniform in honour of the occasion: he had sent in a petition beforehand to Shivajirao begging that we would be graciously pleased not to laugh when he came to the "sixeties," and as this had been granted he was quite happy.

In the evening there was a gala performance at the

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theatre, a large wooden building arranged after the plan of an English theatre, with a very big and deep stage. Their Highnesses did not go, but a number of the English colony had been invited, and all the stalls were reserved for us. The rest of the audience sat in the dress circle, the men separated from the women on either side of a large box for purdah ladies in the centre, with a "chick" or screen in front of it, while in the gallery above a mixed multitude sat indiscriminately.

When Maharani attends the theatre, the whole of the dress circle is screened and reserved for her. The prompt box, scenery and footlights are quite European, and a palpitating slow music accompanies death scenes and other emotional incidents. The costumes were gorgeous, and the scenery quite good, with many changes. The piece was melodramatic and as full of murders as the most approved old Adelphi drama. The women's parts were all taken by boys, and the performers had made up their faces so that they were almost as fair as Europeans, which is considered a beauty and a sign of high caste. There was a good deal of singing of the usual rather painful kind, with a nasal production and much wriggling and making of faces over high notes, and the effect of the beautiful native instruments in the orchestra was spoilt by a terrible harmonium in the middle played by the conductor.

The comic relief was of much the same kind as in

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our theatres, and the audience seemed to find amusement in almost the same situations that entertain European audiences. What amused us most was the programme, which had been printed in English, each one of the innumerable scenes being described at some length.

The play had begun at nine and we got there at ten o'clock; a refreshment tent had been put up outside and the palace servants were in attendance with coffee, ices, pegs and cigars which we were allowed to smoke. By midnight we had enough of it, and, in spite of our anxiety to see the "experiment of the freezing mixture on the schoolmaster's wife" which the programme promised us, we decided to "make a move," as the natives love to say. To prevent the presentation of interminable dramas no play in India is allowed to continue after 1.30 a.m., although the audience would gladly watch it all night. When the servants brought our wraps, there was more hilarity when it was seen that Sanka had brought my dressing-gown instead of my great coat. He probably thought it was a kind of Indian shawl. The manager was waiting outside with a tray piled with garlands of tuberose which he placed round our necks; my appearance in garland and dressing-gown over my evening kit kept us merry until we reached home, and when I went on to the Gordons' bungalow the General nearly had a fit.

There was a great event the next day, nothing less

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than the marriage of my old friend and pupil Vishwasrao, better known as Baba Sahib, to which I had been bidden some days before by a beautiful invitation in Mahratti printed in gold on pink paper. Some little distance beyond the parade-ground in the palace compound there is a very pretty enclosure with marble seats under shady trees, and in the middle a large marble swimming bath with coloured statues of Hindu divinities rising on pedestals from the water, among which we sometimes disport ourselves on days of weary heat.

In a house discreetly overlooking this pleasant spot dwelt the bride, evidently the daughter of some person of distinction, though it is so difficult to get accurate information here on any subject that I have not discovered exactly who she is. The Hindus are naturally a suspicious race ; their instinct is to mislead, and they have raised dissimulation to a fine art. Of them it may well be said in the words of the poet :

“ Oh, what a tangled web we weave when first we practise to deceive !
But when you've practised it for years all difficulty disappears.”

If they are entirely ignorant on any subject, they will pretend to know all about it, and they are peculiarly ingenious in concealing any knowledge that they do happen to possess. However, they assured us that a bride of some kind was to be produced, so at nine o'clock in the morning we made our way to the house aforesaid and assembled in the inner court,

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round which chairs had been placed on a raised verandah. Down below, the Brahmins in their war paint were busy making a mud platform, crooning weird songs and using mysterious incantations; up above us a *purdah* gallery crowded with girls, whose bright eyes flashed behind the "chick."

Soon music was heard in the distance, and we went to the door to watch the arrival of the bridegroom's procession, which was headed by a native band on camels, playing the wildest tunes on the shrillest instruments with a deafening drum accompaniment. Baba was seated on an elephant, wearing a barbaric head-dress with a heavy gold fringe hanging down over his nose, and looking very fierce and proud, though just the ghost of a twinkle came into his eyes when he caught sight of me. It is not easy to look dignified while you are dismounting from an elephant, but he did his best. Then he marched into the courtyard and took his seat cross-legged on the mud platform, while the Brahmins chanted a litany, making excruciating faces the while. Suddenly a door at the back opened, and the father of the bride rushed in carrying her in his arms and plumped her down on the platform opposite to Baba, who took no notice of her whatever. She was not veiled, but her hair was so thickly braided with white flowers that you could not very well see her face, which she kept modestly turned to the ground.

The mystic rites which were performed were lost

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upon me, but I remember that they were tied together with a long cord by the Brahmins, who then gave Baba a handful of rice which he threw over the bride; and then we all began to throw rice as hard as we could, just as we do at a wedding at home, the ladies in the *purdah* gallery joining in with great energy: one of them, a pretty girl with a large diamond nose-ring, seemed to be aiming hers at me, but I did not discover who she was until Indira accused me at dinner of having "cut" her in the morning.

I then noticed for the first time that her nose was pierced on one side for a ring; she very seldom wears one, though she evidently thinks it adds to the beauty of the face: to my unaccustomed eyes it gives it rather a lop-sided appearance.

Meanwhile a terrific noise was going on, the camel band playing on one side of the house, the military band on the other, and the Brahmins in the middle trying to out-do them both. No ceremony in India is complete without the offering of flowers, which the bride's father then proceeded to make to all the guests, taking them from trays carried behind him by servants.

First a garland of beautiful white scented flowers is placed round your neck—a delicate operation in the case of an English girl wearing a large picture hat—and the conventional bouquet handed to you; you are then sprinkled with rose-water from a silver flask,

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and finally a spoonful of the precious attar of roses is taken from a sort of mustard-pot and daubed on your hand. It is an anxious moment when there are not enough garlands to go round and they are only given to the most honoured guests; you have then to assume an unconcerned look as though you had not observed what was going on. When two or three dozen people are waiting with garlands for the Gaekwar he wears one of them and just touches the others, which are then collected by a servant in a business-like way. It is a graceful custom, especially when the recipient is wearing native dress: when you are clothed in a frock-coat and top-hat it is not so becoming.

In India, wedding festivities last for several days. I should very much have liked to see the whole of them, but Maharaja thought that they might bore the rest of our party and had arranged that Turnbull should take us out for a picnic into the country to see the State elephants, which are often taken from their stables in the city to an encampment at a village called Domad some six miles away.

Driving through the country, which grew more wooded and beautiful as we went on, we suddenly came upon a scene which brought delighted exclamations of surprise and pleasure to our lips; before us were spread the clear waters of a large lake, in the middle of which rose an island with an ancient temple, almost buried in creepers covered with large

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purple blossoms. On the bank was an old pavilion with shady arcades and sunny steps descending to the water. And all around, under the huge trees of the spacious forest, were the lordly elephants, some stretched at ease upon the ground, others lazily swinging their trunks to brush away the flies, giving themselves a dry shampoo with bundles of hay or munching sugar-canes.

There are about fifty elephants in Baroda, of which some thirty were here, the others being granted to high officials, as marks of the royal favour, with a suitable allowance for their maintenance, each of them costing about two hundred pounds a year. Sampatrao is very proud of his, and has built him a stable almost as big as his own house; but others are not so pampered, and there are several places in the city where you may see an elephant standing in an open yard just off the street, taking a mild interest in the passers-by and in the games of the children playing at his feet.

Near their gigantic charges the keepers were sitting in groups, chatting and smoking hubble-bubble pipes, Mohammedans all of them, with grave faces and venerable beards. They rose and gave us the salaam, and as we had a native with us who spoke English, we were soon chatting with them as we walked round to inspect their pets and feed them with the nearest thing to the regulation bun that we had been able to get. Each one had some story to tell of his own

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particular elephant, who was, of course, far superior to the others.

Afterwards, we sat in the pavilion and watched a dozen *bathis* taken down to the lake to bathe; they swam almost under water, with just the top of the head showing, putting up their trunks now and then to breathe; some of the mahouts went in riding them, but were soon shaken off by the tremendous plunges of the delighted beasts and swam ashore again. When the elephants came out they lay on the bank in the sun squirting water over their hides with their trunks, which they seemed to enjoy as much as the bath itself. One of them was shampooed by his mahout, quivering and grunting with joy at the process.

Tiffin was served in Indian style with native dishes, and then we lay at ease listening to stories from the "Arabian Nights," which Turnbull had brought with him and taking it in turns to read; never before did Aladdin and Ali Baba seem such real and enchanting people. It was a wonderful afternoon, full of delightful memories.

The next night we had Indian dinner in one of Maharani's rooms, the floor of which is covered with a pattern of mosaic indicating the places where the guests sit. Her Highness had given the ladies beautiful Indian *saris* for the occasion, and the Gaekwar presented Turnbull and me with new *agniakar*s, as the outer coats are called, of bright silk covered with gold embroidery. Lady Maud and Miss Clarke had

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never dined à *l'Indienne* before, and were wild with joy at the novelty of it, looking charming in their new guise. The food was most delicious, and no spoons or forks were allowed. It was eaten from gold trays of exquisite workmanship, and the decorations were superb. We all enjoyed our dinner very much, besides giving the greatest amusement to Maharani Sahib and Indira, who laughed more that evening than they have ever done before in their lives.

Afterwards we went down to the Durbar hall, where musicians and nautch-girls were waiting, and watched the best nautch-dance that I have yet seen. It was called the Cobra dance, quite unlike the ordinary nautch and very graceful. Two pretty Tanjore girls wound up a handkerchief to represent a hooded cobra and then danced round it with soothing, mesmerizing gestures to charm it. One of them pretended to be bitten and fell to the ground, but the other restored her to life, and finally they both danced in triumph round the snake.

The dancing consists not so much in what we understand by the word, as in the movements of the body and gestures of the hands; the part played by the feet is comparatively unimportant. To European eyes it is curiously unattractive and monotonous, but there can be no doubt that it appeals very strongly to the native mind. The men playing the instruments get tremendously excited, and the faces of the spectators show absorbing interest; at first they remain

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quite motionless and silent, but as they come more and more under the influence of the rhythmic measure, their hands and then their feet begin to move unconsciously, as though they were themselves taking part in the performance. Even the Gaekwar becomes much more interested and excited than I have ever seen him at any spectacle in London. The dancing girls themselves have a proud look and haughty bearing, as though fully conscious of the extraordinary power which they exercise over others, and the fatter they are the more they fancy themselves.

The most impressive of the various entertainments organized for the amusement of our visitors were the arena sports, which are only held on great occasions. The scene was one which you could never forget. Just outside the city gates lies the vast sunken arena, surrounded by high walls, washed a bright pink, above which congregated the gayest coloured crowd imaginable, most of them holding gaudy umbrellas over their heads. Some had climbed the nearest trees and looked like huge masses of bright flowers amongst the green. Others had scrambled on to the elephants, which stood round shuffling restlessly about and flapping their great ears. The air was filled with the hum and buzz of thousands of voices, which rose and fell to the accompaniment of wild strains of native music. The blue canopy of the sky stretched over the gay scene, and the blazing sun made the bright colours dazzling. Rising above the wall on one side in the





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centre was the grand stand, in which seats were placed for the Maharaja and his guests, and not far away the *purdah* stand, through which the dim forms of the ladies could be vaguely seen.

Maharani had told me in the morning that she should probably not go, as she was not feeling very well and was afraid that the elephant fight might be too exciting; however, about half way through the programme she arrived, and the Princess with her.

The sports opened with a display of wrestling, in which four or five pairs took part, some of them being enormous men, who had some difficulty in getting a grip on the smooth skins and supple bodies of their opponents. The bouts were contested strictly in accordance with the rules of the game, and were keenly followed by the spectators, each point being warmly applauded, and the victors strutted about, patting their great limbs amid an enthusiastic circle of admirers. This was followed by a buffalo fight. The two unwieldy animals rushed at each other like furies, and then with locked horns strove for some minutes to force one another back. Suddenly one of them took to his heels and, before he could be stopped, lumbered across the arena, followed by the victor; both dashed through the open doors into the street and disappeared, upsetting many an apple-cart in the market-place in their wild career. If a buffalo once bolts, he can never be induced to

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fight again, so they are generally separated before one of them loses his courage. After a tremendous struggle, the next pair were dragged apart by ropes tied to their hind legs, and as they were reluctant to go the effect was most ridiculous.

After several buffaloes rams appeared. They tilted at each other with terrific force, clashing their heads together with resounding thuds, but, with the exception of one broken horn, no harm was done. Generally one of the rams was the aggressor, the other standing steady to receive the blow, and having to be dragged into position to receive another charge, looking far from happy.

At length came the event of the afternoon, the elephant fight. Two great elephants, so heavily chained by the legs that they could only move with short steps, were led in at opposite ends of the arena, surrounded by men with long spears. The men backed the elephants against the walls and crept into passages made in them, from which safe places they undid their shackles. At first they moved slowly, looking from side to side, as though uncertain of their freedom, but as soon as they caught sight of one another they instantly charged like two express engines dashing into collision.

It was an imposing, terrific sight to see these two monsters with raised trunks and locked tusks, swaying backwards and forwards and exerting their enormous muscular strength to its utmost limit against each other.

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The crowd grew excited, and filled the air with shouts which drowned the trumpeting of the elephants. Turnbull had brought his fox terrier Susan with him; up to this point she had been very good and ladylike, but now she barked loudly and struggled so wildly to jump down into the arena and take part in the fight that he had hard work to hold her back.

At length one of the elephants broke a tusk, and Maharaja, not wishing that they should damage themselves further, gave the order to separate them. Two men crept up behind with huge steel springs set with sharp spikes which they clapped on to their legs. The pain must have been severe, as they both stopped dead in a moment, holding the injured leg in the air; the next moment they were making for each other again, but by this time other men had run up with ropes and chains and dragged them apart, still trumpeting defiance and waving angry trunks. By the united efforts of some hundreds of men they were slowly hauled off the ground.

The prettiest and most exciting event of the day was kept till the end. One of my friends from the stables came cantering into the arena, mounted on my favourite Arab horse, Dilrubah, who curvetted and pranced along, rejoicing in his strength and swiftness. With graceful, easy bounds, they circled round the arena, and then, with a mighty roar, a huge "must" elephant, suffering from the periodical fit of madness which attacks elephants from time to time,

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was let loose upon them and came on in hot pursuit; Dilrubah and his rider seemed to be quite unaware of his approach, and although I had perfect confidence in their skill, my heart stood still for a moment as the great beast drew nearer and nearer to them. Just as their destruction seemed inevitable, they shot swiftly ahead and then went along calmly and easily as before. Again the elephant almost overtook them, when they bounded lightly to one side, just missing the mighty blow aimed at them by his trunk as he rushed past them in full career. When he next charged, the horseman wheeled sharply round and passing behind him caught him a good crack with the whip, a feat of which he was probably quite unconscious, but which elicited a great shout of applause from the spectators. They then cantered out as easily as they had come in, without showing the smallest sign of heat or fatigue. The performance was far more exciting than any Spanish bull-fight, and without any of its horrors.

Other horsemen now appeared on the scene, and the arena was flooded with a crowd of men who ran about in all directions, pursued by the infuriated and bewildered elephant. It was a most thrilling game to watch, as every moment he seemed to be on the point of catching his man, and then a sharp prick from a spear would divert his rage to his new tormentor. Suddenly he changed his tactics, and giving us a knowing wink, or so it seemed, he made

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his way to a round-house of stone, built in the centre of the arena, with passages in its thick walls leading to an open enclosure. Some twenty men had taken refuge inside, on whom he now concentrated all his attention, walking carefully all round it and examining it closely, then kneeling down and trying to reach his prey through the passages, then rearing up against the wall and waving his trunk over the top, then leaning against it and trying to break it down by sheer force, his wicked old face wearing all the time the most cunning and exultant expression.

It was all no good, however, and he was overpowered and dragged away, after having had half an hour of the most keen enjoyment. The extraordinary thing is that when his fit of madness is over he will be as gentle and docile as ever. As his final trumpeting died away the horn of a motor-car mingled with them, and the Maharaja's forty horse-power Fiat dashed into the arena, followed by a mounted escort of bearded warriors with flashing swords; as he drove away with the fair English girl sitting beside him, through the crowds of natives lying prostrate on the ground before him, one could not help being struck by the startling incongruity of the picture, curiously emphasizing the sharp contrast between the old world and the new, which seems, alas! destined only too soon to drive out these remnants of the old *régime*. Once they were the daily distractions of the Eastern monarch; now he

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makes use of them to afford a holiday to the vulgar crowd. And yet when he does condescend to attend them himself, the force of heredity asserts itself, and his gleaming eyes and quickened pulse make one feel that it has cost him something after all to put away the childish pleasures which delighted his ancestors, and to seek a more abiding satisfaction in the dull routine of official work.

This work has lately been of an unusually anxious and arduous kind. One of his subjects had been tried for murder and condemned to death, and had appealed to the royal clemency for a remission of the capital sentence. For many days the Gaekwar had devoted most earnest attention to the matter, reading every word of the evidence very carefully, conferring with the judges and personally re-examining several of the witnesses. From one of these he elicited some important new evidence, which showed that there were such extenuating circumstances in the case as to justify him in reducing the sentence to one of life-imprisonment. Then the question arose whether this would be a kindness to the man himself; after weighing the general question in all its aspects, the Maharaja decided to take the unusual course of interviewing the convict, and as it seemed likely that his skill in carving might make him useful and even happy in gaol he reduced the sentence.

This, and the heavy addition to his social duties, had affected his health, and the doctors advised ten

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days of complete rest and change at Matheran, a hill-station in the *ghats* beyond Bombay.

Our visitors left us in the morning, with many mutual expressions of pleasure and regret, Miss Clarke assuring the Gaekwar that he had earned her eternal gratitude by providing her with so many new sensations, His Highness delighted to have made so enthusiastic and sympathetic a convert to the humanitarian and scientific schemes which are so dear to his heart, and which yet cause him to be regarded in many quarters with suspicion and distrust. In the evening we left in the Gaekwar's private saloon for Bombay, in which we had our *chota hazri* the next morning, while it was being attached to the train for Neral, which we reached at 9.30 a.m.

We were met at the station by Hingujirao, who had been sent on ahead with twelve servants to make "bundobust," a great word in India meaning arrangements; the man who can make good bundobust is held in high esteem.

We were quite a small party, Maharaja, Nimbalker, Doctor J. and myself, with, of course, our servants, without whom no one can move anywhere in India. Ponies, rickshaws and palkis were waiting to convey us over the ten miles of hill roads, and by the Gaekwar's advice I chose a palki, which is a litter in the shape of a long box with sides rather like a coffin, which is slung on bamboo poles with curtains; there are six bearers to each palki, two before and

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two behind, with the other two to relieve them from time to time; they were wonderfully strong, active men, and took us along at about four miles an hour.

At first the path was very steep, and in the first three miles we must have ascended quite 1,500 feet; after that the road became more gradual, and we walked for some miles in the shady parts, luxuriant trees clothing the side of the hill, and cloaking the precipice, and disclosing beautiful views from time to time. There is a mountain railway which we kept crossing, but it was out of order, for which I was not sorry, as it did not look very safe. Half way up we halted for a short rest by a picturesque well, where the bearers washed and drank the water.

We got to the bungalow just before noon; it belongs to a Parsi baronet called Petit, who had lent it to the Maharaja, and commands a fine view. As it has a small tower, it is called Tour Petit, after its owner, and he has also played upon his name in Latin, his motto being *Consequitur Quodcunque Petit*. These Parsis are very fond of calling their dwelling-places and lands after their own names, which you see plastered up all over the place, as the rich ones have bungalows in most of the hill stations.

Breakfast was ready for us, and then we slept till tea-time, after which Maharaja took Hingujirao and myself for a walk round the place. He is a great believer in pedestrian exercise and never misses walking for an hour both morning and evening, the time

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being kept to the minute by some one with him. He goes steadily ahead and covers three miles in the hour; sometimes he talks, but as often as not he meditates on whatever is uppermost in his thoughts, with his eyes bent on the ground. Maharani Sahib very rightly thinks that this is bad for him and has begged me to keep his attention engaged on any subject, however trivial, whether he likes it or not, and this I try to do, though it is not always easy, as he has great powers of sarcasm and can make the most petrifying remarks without apparent effort in dulcet tones.

To-day, however, he was eager to show me all the beauties of the place and was animated and amusing, and his good spirits went on increasing throughout our visit, so that we have all enjoyed it immensely. One of the most striking things about the Maharaja is the extraordinary influence which he exercises on those around him: he is the sun round which they all revolve; when he is in good health and spirits everyone is gay and happy, when he is anxious and depressed a general feeling of depression prevails, and when he is ill the light of the brightest day seems clouded, and we all go about with long faces and hushed voices. Luckily, he generally enjoys good health, but a serious illness some years ago has left him subject to occasional attacks of feverish disorder.

To-day he was wearing a brown velvet knickerbocker suit with worsted stockings and a Homburg

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hat; Hingujirao was arrayed in white flannel trousers, black frock coat with a little blue tie and *puggari*, and was carrying a great thick stick, almost as big as himself, to kill any snakes we might meet. Behind were six servants, in long scarlet coats with Maharaja's monogram worked in gold on the breast, bearing a chair slung on two poles called a *jhampan* in case he got tired, and one of them carried his *puggari* wrapped in a large green silk handkerchief, so that we presented rather an unusual spectacle. There were, however, very few people about, as it was not the season.

Matheran is a narrow tableland standing about three thousand feet above sea level with offshoots in many directions, limited on all sides by mighty precipices and ending abruptly in bluffs called "points." The walks through thick avenues of shady trees are beautiful and the views magnificent; far away to the West lie the waters and islands of the bay beyond Bombay, and on a clear day the city itself and the shipping in the harbour can be seen.

Almost every day we have been for a pic-nic to one of these "points," spending practically the whole day in the open air. A description of one of these must be sufficient: Maharaja, who never waits for anyone, set off rather suddenly, before the others were ready, taking me with him, a guide walking in front to show us the way, which we should have had some difficulty in finding for ourselves amid the innumer-

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able paths branching off in all directions. For an hour or more we walked along the top of the hill, and then turned off and began the descent down a steep path along the side of the precipice.

When we got to the foot, we walked for some way under the trees, and at last came to a shady open space, where we found a tent set up with a bed in it for His Highness, a large table laid for lunch and a smaller one with the book-box on it, and another box containing games of all kinds, cards, chess, draughts, dominoes, etc., without which we never travel; for although the Gaekwar is rather apt to despise games when he is engaged in more serious work, when he is taking a holiday he is very fond of them, and there are few which he does not play well.

To-day, however, he felt inclined to read, so I read Keats' "St. Agnes' Eve" aloud to him; it is one of my favourite poems, and I was delighted to see how much he enjoyed it.

It was now half-past eleven and we were hungry, but the doctor and Hingujirao had not yet appeared, so we had lunch without them, a good hot one, and talked about Keats and Shelley, and the Gaekwar remarked what a pity it was that they had never been in India, as they could have painted the most lovely word-pictures of its wonderful sights. Just as we were finishing, our friends appeared very hot and tired, saying that they had been delayed by two huge cobras which barred their path. At first I believed

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this, but when the Gaekwar was unable to contain his explosions of laughter, I smelt a rat and saw that it was all a put-up job to frighten me, as I have rather a horror of snakes and always carry about with me a little lancet and bottle of antidote for their poison in case I should be bitten. The bite of the cobra can sometimes be cured in this way, but no antidote has yet been discovered for some of the others, notably Russell's Viper, a very fierce and venomous creature which will attack men of its own accord, while most of the others are timid and only act in self-defence, preferring to glide quietly out of your way if they can.

Nearly all the mortality from snake-bite in India is among the natives walking about with bare feet in the jungle, and they are also very careless; the other day a man lost his life in Baroda through picking up a snake. It was lying quite straight across the road, and in the moonlight looked such a good useful stick; but he soon found out his mistake, poor fellow!

When they had lunched we played bridge till three o'clock and then had tea, after which we started for the walk home, taking a much longer path; the first part of the way was very lovely, over rough and romantic ground covered with gnarled trees suggesting fairies and giants and—snakes! We then had a fairly stiff bit of climbing up the mountains; we had with us a number of bearers carrying a *jhampan*, but it

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was never used, and empty as it was they had hard work to get it up in several places.

The doctor found the ascent very trying; when it began he had mounted a pony, but as soon as it grew steep the law of gravity became too strong for him, and our own gravity was also quite upset as we saw him roll slowly off over the horse's tail. Luckily he was stopped before he had rolled very far.

When we reached the top we found ourselves on Panorama Point, where comfortable seats and drinks had been placed ready for us. The road goes quite round the brow of the peak, and affords a beautiful panoramic view of the country from which the point gets its name. Across the valley lay Porcupine Point, so called because porcupines are sometimes found there.

After a good long rest we went home, Maharaja in a rickshaw and Nimbalker and myself on horseback; the doctor had had enough horses for one day and preferred to walk, Hingujirao, who is a capital rider, good-naturedly giving him the benefit of his company and the protection of his enormous stick.

When we walked in the garden after dinner, a man was always in attendance with a lantern to frighten away snakes, so there really are some about. A rubber of bridge usually brought our evenings to a peaceful close. The doctor is just learning the game and Maharaja rags him unmercifully, playing the wrong cards from dummy for him and making the

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poor little man so nervous that he can hardly see. Now and then of course he has the doctor for a partner, and then he is very much in earnest, as he does not like being beaten, and consequently the doctor plays worse than ever.

One night, as I was going to bed, a fearsome creature came scuttling over the wooden floor, making me jump hastily on to the nearest chair, as my feet were bare. It was like a large crab, and moved about with great rapidity, and, for all I knew, might have been a scorpion or a baby porcupine. Sanka said it was a butterfly! After a great hunt under the bed and all round the room, he caught it and put it outside. I expected to see him drop down dead: however, he took no harm.

That is the worst of these bungalows with all the rooms on the ground floor, all kinds of creatures come in and make free with your belongings. The other day, while I was having tea, two squirrels came in and carried off biscuits and sugar from the table: they did it so prettily that I quite enjoyed watching them. After that, whenever there was anything to eat in the room they came in, and not only carried things away, but sat on the table and ate from the plates. At last I got rather bored with them and tried to drive them away, but it was no use; they had quite made up their minds that they were pets, and pets they would be in spite of all my efforts to show them, by throwing boots at them, that I did

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not share their views. These squirrels abound everywhere and are as common as sparrows in a London street. They are grey in colour, with long feathery tails, and it is a pretty sight to see them playing about among the horses in the stables.

Monkeys, too, are very plentiful and are often a terrible nuisance. The natives are so kind to all animals that they get very cheeky and do a lot of damage: a herd of monkeys will often leap, one after another, from a tree on to the roof of a bungalow, and send the tiles flying all over the place, besides stealing everything they can lay their hands on. But people take it all very calmly: sometimes a small boy is sent into the garden to shoot at them with a toy bow and arrows, but, of course, they soon get accustomed to him.

The towns and villages are full of pariah dogs whom no one ever dreams of molesting. In Baroda you often see a dreary cage on wheels being drawn along, full of them, fighting and yelling like so many demons. They are then driven out to some village in the country and let loose there, to the great concern of the inhabitants, and in a few days they have all found their way back again. This is as far as the Maharaja dare go at present in the matter: he would like to pop them all into a lethal chamber, but public opinion is not yet sufficiently advanced for that.

It is quite a common thing to see the traffic of a

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busy street thrown into confusion because a cow has thought fit to lie down in the middle of the road or on the pavement, knowing perfectly well that no one will disturb her, as it would be the height of impiety to do so.

To-morrow we go back to dear Baroda, as the Gaekwar wants to set out as soon as possible on his annual inspection of the districts. So, for a few days at any rate, I shall be able to enjoy the luxurious privacy of my rooms, too far from the ground to be disturbed by animals, though monkeys will sometimes invade them. More than once in the morning I have heard a great chattering, and going out on to the balcony, have seen the terrace over the Durbar hall full of them, merrily engaged in leap-frog and other simian games. Then, when I have watched them to my heart's content, I clap my hands and in a few seconds the whole crowd of them are down on the ground, having swung themselves from story to story with incredible rapidity, leaping from one balustrade to another with sureness of foot and eye that makes the very thought of a fall impossible, the little ones clinging to their mothers' waists through the dizzy descent, and are galloping away to the trees.

Twice too, we had been invaded by bees, "honey-flies," as Sanka calls them, seeking a place in which to swarm and playing havoc with my afternoon meditations: the first time they swarmed in my



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verandah high up in the corner, and we had an exciting time while they were being taken by three natives, who put up a rickety scaffolding of bamboo poles which nearly brought the whole party to the ground just when they had got the imprisoned myriads in a large muslin bag: on the second occasion they chose a still more inaccessible place high up in one of the domes of the roof, where they hung in an enormous cluster for some days. It seemed almost impossible to get at them, but the ingenuity of the native mind was equal to the task, though while it was being done we were away on a shooting-party to my great disappointment.

I must not forget to say how sorry I was when my visit to the Evans-Gordons came to an end. They were so kind, and though the festivities at the palace took up a great deal of our time, still I managed to see enough of them to make me want to see more.

Nearly every morning Jean and Joan rode with me, and we had some delightful musical evenings, as the whole family are so fond of music; Mrs. Evans-Gordon plays, the General sings and performs on the guitar, and Jean has a most charming voice of good compass and full of rich and melodious notes, which she ought to turn to good advantage when she is a little older. Their house is a favourite resort of all the English people from the Camp, and their tennis afternoon is always one of the chief events of the week. They have a number of pets, including a parrot who talks

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fluently in Mahratti, and a dear little fawn who lives in the compound and comes to the house to be fed.

The General is a great sportsman and has shot over two hundred tigers. The twins are so much alike that even now I do not know them apart and make the most ridiculous mistakes. They have travelled in Europe, but have never been in England, and are very keen on seeing a Drury Lane pantomime.

Such an ideal English home is a refreshing oasis in this strange land: it makes you long for home and all your own dear ones. Amid all these pleasures and palaces my thoughts are with you over six thousand miles of ocean and wish you a happy New Year.

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AT last I am in India; not in a town with a bank and a Gymkhana and English people to call on, but right in the heart of the country where an Englishman is seldom seen. We are now in camp, about fifty miles from Baroda and not far from the Gulf of Cambay. The camp is pitched just outside a little town on a large level space and as far as possible under shady trees; the officer in charge of the district has taken a good deal of trouble about it and it looks very smart. On either side of a broad gravel drive twenty tents are pitched leading up to three larger ones at the end. They are roomy and comfortable, furnished with carpets, beds, tables and chairs, divided in the middle so as to form a bedroom and sitting-room, and with a passage outside leading to a primitive bath-room. Outside, little gardens have been arranged with such flowers as could be induced to grow in them at short notice, and a fountain is playing in a large bed in the centre.

The first of the larger tents consists of only one apartment; on the large white carpet is an arm-chair

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in which is seated the Maharaja, round the sides a deputation of local magnates is sitting on the ground, and outside are three other batches whom he will receive in the course of the afternoon. Behind this is the Gaekwar's own tent, containing six or seven rooms, with a shady awning running all round it, and beyond this again another tent which we use for our meals.

Just inside the gates of the camp a military band is playing and affording great delight to the crowd of natives listening outside; more than it affords to the Padre, sitting in the tent nearest to the Gaekwar's at a writing-table plentifully stocked with materials—as he is supposed to be a great hand at that game, though in his heart he loathes it—laboriously compiling a lecture on Religion which he is to deliver at Baroda on our return. He is groaning over his task when Sanka raises the “chick” and gives him a handful of letters, from which he selects one and then retires to an arm-chair to devour it greedily.

After our Christmas gaieties, this quiet camp life is delightful. This is the third place we have visited; first we went to Dabhoi, a most interesting thirteenth century town, with a fine tank in the middle and four magnificent gates of beautiful ancient Hindu architecture covered with elaborate carvings of nymphs, alligators and elephants. In one place a man and a woman are carved four feet high, exactly like Adam and Eve with the tree between them, only instead of

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the serpent there is a tall devil near with a ghastly leer on his face.

Near one of the gates is a most curious temple built within the thickness of the wall, in which the holy rites are still performed. The Brahmin in charge was most obsequious and invited me to enter the sacred shrine, but nothing would induce me to do so; these Hindu deities are not to be trifled with and the least one can do is to treat them with respect. Maharaja, who is a bit of a sceptic, laughed at my scruples, but I am sure that Rani Sahib and Shivajirao would have approved them.

When he had completed his marvellous work, the hapless architect is said to have been buried alive over one of his own gateways, to make sure of his not producing a finer building elsewhere. That was a pleasant way they had in the old days; if you created anything especially beautiful you were lucky if you only had your eyes put out or your hands cut off.

Although it is on one of the Gaekwar's railways, very few people from the outside world ever come here, and the sand of the desert is gradually covering the walls already fractured by the thick roots of the trees that have grown in them. Yet fifteen thousand people still flock through its narrow streets, and here and there naughty eyes look down from ancient casements, as they did from the walls of Jericho.

Then we went on to Bahadarpur, where the camp

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had been pitched round a bungalow, where the Gaekwar had his quarters. As there are two complete sets of tents for these camps there is no delay; while the last is being dismantled and taken elsewhere we find the next all ready. The chief object of these tours is to make all possible provision against the terrible famines which afflict the country, sweeping away millions of people and costing enormous sums in relief works. The only way in which to fight them is by irrigation, and a large amount of money is spent annually on artificial lakes with dams and canals, to supplement the plucky and ingenious efforts of the small cultivators, whose primitive methods are good enough under normal conditions, but are quite inadequate in years of scanty rainfall, and fail altogether in those of complete drought.

The important part played by water is shown by the innumerable wells which cover the whole country, and which are the chief care of these little communities. You understand out here why they made such a fuss over the people who dug wells in the Bible. These wells are, as a rule, approached by bullock runs about fifteen yards long and ten feet deep, along which a pair of bullocks toil up and down, drawing up the water in a huge leathern bucket by means of a pulley-wheel erected over the mouth of the well. The creaking of the pulley makes a kind of weird mournful tune, which is one of the most characteristic sounds of India.

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We went to see one of these great artificial lakes with dams at a village seven miles up the railway, being pushed along the line in trolleys by natives, a novel and amusing way of getting about. It was a fine piece of work, and the amount of stone that has been transported into this desolate region for the dam and the handsome bridge by which it is approached is astonishing.

On the way back we stopped to see the quarries from which they dig the beautiful green marble which is used so effectively in the Gaekwar's palaces; it is said to be unique, and there seems to be an inexhaustible supply of it.

Of course, on these expeditions, pleasure is mingled in no small measure with the toils of business, according to Oriental custom. The small game shooting in the districts is exceptionally good, and for months before the Gaekwar appears on the scene, the officer in charge has given special attention to it, and the native population look forward to the holiday which it affords them; while as none of them eats anything but rice, there is very little poaching. We had a long expedition one day to a lovely river where some "muggars," or alligators, had been seen, but though we found them and had several shots at them none of them took effect, to our great disappointment.

As Petlad, where we are now, lies on the other side of Baroda from Dabhoi, we spent a day or two at Raj Mahal before we came on, travelling in another

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saloon of a more old-fashioned make which the Gaekwar uses on his light railways.

When we reached the station, we had an eight-mile ride to the camp, where we arrived soon after ten o'clock in the morning. There was a bitterly cold wind, and for the first time in India I enjoyed the sensation of being thoroughly cold and was glad to run to the kitchen and warm myself by the big fire burning in the mud grates. It was nice to find that the camp was under Vaniker's charge, and he gave us a welcome as warm as his fire.

At this time of the year, there are about twelve hours' daylight, and we make the most of them, as it is not hot enough to make a siesta in the afternoon a necessity. Soon after sunrise we are in the saddle, a party of fifteen or so, most of us in ordinary riding kit, except an equerry who rides ahead, carrying a gold stick about four feet long tied with gay ribbons; his horse's furniture is also in keeping with native customs, a high-peaked saddle heavily padded, with a red saddle cloth and reins and stirrup ropes of the same colour.

The Maharaja's groom has a large tin case slung to his saddle on one side, containing plans and ordnance maps, and on the other a leather case with a *topè* in it and a *puggari* for the Gaekwar to wear when we reach the towns which he is visiting.

The country is varied in character and well-wooded, and there are many Aval trees, covered with a bright yellow blossom, from which they make the toothsticks

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(Miswak) which keep their teeth so perfect. You very rarely see a native with bad teeth, and Dr. Jadhav tells me that it is partly because they use the stick instead of the unclean brush, and partly because they use very little vinegar with their food.

These towns, when we reach them, present an extraordinary spectacle. All the inhabitants of the neighbouring villages have flocked in to see the Gaekwar, who has not been in this part of the country for some time, and the streets are so closely packed with people that it is sometimes hard work to force a way through them. Shops, doorways, windows are full of eager faces, and the roofs of the houses are crowded with women, who hope to see without being seen. They are all wearing their best, and the sun blazes down upon a feast of changing colour.

The horses are wonderfully good, as people are pressing upon them on all sides, and the clamour is deafening. Slowcoach is out here with me and is perfect in a crowd, never showing the slightest ill-temper; my other horse, a beautiful little black Arab with a white star on his forehead, is not so easy to manage, though he seldom gives much trouble. His name is Mattine, and he is quite a darling and awfully keen to go, so that I am glad when we have a good long gallop early in the day; he has a fine mane and tail and such pretty ways, and is in many respects better fun to ride than Slowcoach. But I am still faithful to my first love; he grows more and

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more human every day, and I feel that I could trust him in any emergency. He likes to hear English spoken, and when I am out for a ride by myself I often talk to him and sometimes, as a great treat, sing to him, which he enjoys still more, especially when I bring his own name into the song. At first the Gaekwar did not like me to ride by myself, as there is so much unrest in India; but Nimbalker assured him that there was not the smallest danger, and though I have been the cause of a good deal of surprise and sometimes almost of terror, I have not met with any unpleasantness.

The business to be done in each town or village varies very much: now there is a new tank to be inspected, now a new temple to be visited; but wherever there is a low caste school the Gaekwar makes a point of visiting it just to show them, as he puts it, that this caste business is all rubbish. That may be so, but it has grown through all these centuries into a hardy plant which will take a good deal of uprooting. He thinks me an awful pessimist, and is horrified because I am not enamoured with universal education, and tell him blood-curdling tales of the mischief it is doing in rural England; and yet he enjoys an argument with some one who has the courage of his opinions.

Many of the children in these schools are sweet little things, much more attractive than their higher caste brethren; in one place we went to they were

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doing physical drill with evident enjoyment. We were much amused by one of the boys who was wearing a pair of trousers made out of some coarse material with "24 yards" printed in large letters on the seat and arresting the eye each time that he touched the ground; probably he was rather proud of possessing so distinguished a garment.

When work is over there is shikar before and after tiffin and then we return to the camp, where the Gaekwar receives deputations all the afternoon; usually they bring petitions with them and support their claims with long impassioned speeches. When the public bodies have had their say, individual petitions are presented, asking, as a rule, for a grant of money; one man has lost a bullock, another has been mauled by a leopard, a third has had his house burnt to the ground.

I ask Maharaja why they do not insure their houses, and am told that we have not yet reached the millennium. The order is that all petitions shall be brought to the camp, but the peasant thinks he has a better chance at a private hearing and uses dodges of all kinds to get one.

As we go for our evening drive a whole family will suddenly emerge from behind the cactus hedge and throw themselves flat right across the road, and you have either to drive over them or hear what they have to say. They always pretend that the petition has been written by one of the children,

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though it is obviously the work of the local scribe. Then, while the Gaekwar is having his hour's walk, an old woman throws herself at his feet and grovels in the dust. She tells the old story of the next-door neighbour whose cows have broken into her garden and eaten all her vegetables. "Well," says Maharaja, "what do you want me to do? Shall I send a cannon and blow his house to pieces?" She is much attracted by this idea, but thinks it will be enough if he will send soldiers to shoot the cows. After some more friendly chaff, an order is given that the cows be bound over to keep the peace, and she continues to invoke shrill blessings on the royal head so long as it is in sight.

The most interesting time of the day comes after dinner, when the Gaekwar strolls with me about the camp while he smokes a cigarette. The combined influences of the tobacco and a good digestion produce a calm contemplative mood, in which he opens the secret chambers of his mind and expands his thoughts, and I am privileged to hear the ripe and admirable opinions on religion, morals and politics which he does not give to the world at large, and which are all the more impressive because of the sincere conviction and simplicity with which they are expressed.

The rest of the short evening is given up to games and we read some light amusing book for half an hour before turning in. Some weeks ago a friend

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had recommended "Anna Karenina," by Tolstoy, to him. He began it by himself and asked me to help him to finish it, as he never gives up anything which he has once begun. The book may be all right in its native Russian, but in the translation I found it dreadfully dull; luckily, one evening, when we were still a hundred pages from the end, Maharaja was sleepy and kept nodding and at last fell fast asleep, and by judicious skipping I soon reached the end; when he awoke, he was so thankful to hear that it was all over that he did not ask any awkward questions. So to make a complete change I telegraphed to the library for "Alice in Wonderland," which was sent out by special messenger; it had an enormous success, and drove all games out of the field, the Gaekwar asking: "Shall we go to our Alice?" almost immediately after dinner. I made it last as long as I could, and then suggested something in a different style, but Maharaja did not agree: "Oh, I think we may as well hear what Alice is going to do next." So "Through the Looking-glass" we went, and found it a more delightful country than ever before. My favourite scene, where Bill the Lizard comes down the chimney and goes out again, never went better, and it would have been worth going many a mile to hear the Gaekwar's rendering of: "You are old, father William." An order was given that both books should be translated into Mahratti; I said that I did not envy the man who

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undertook the task, but Maharaja said that they might as well try. If it is ever accomplished it is sure to be a remarkable curiosity of literature.

The other night we had a little adventure, almost exciting, coming down the placid stream of camp life. During our after-dinner stroll, we heard a noise and saw some natives running about in the light of a fire a hundred yards away. Maharaja looked at them attentively and said he thought they were driving away a dog; then we returned to Alice her adventures.

An hour later, when I had closed the book and Maharaja was pleading for just one more chapter, there was suddenly a great commotion outside the tent door, and Maharaja said he thought they had found a snake. We ran to the door, and there, only a few yards away, was a sentry with a mad jackal pinned to the earth by his bayonet. We called for lights and it breathed its last just as we came up. It then transpired that it had already bitten two men in the camp, and Vaniker had placed extra sentries at all the tent doors. It had been making for us at full speed when the man caught sight of it and killed it. Maharaja was very pleased, as he evidently thought that we had had rather a narrow escape. If I had been going across to my tent a few minutes earlier I should very probably have been bitten.

Next morning the regiment was paraded, and the soldier, a fine looking fellow with a quiet, modest

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bearing, was called out to be congratulated on his pluck and activity by the Maharaja, who promoted him from the ranks and granted him extra pay. The natives who had been bitten were sent to the Pasteur Institute up in the hills. They did not want to go, but Maharaja was peremptory about it, and we hear that they are going on very well.

The most interesting place we went to was a small town called Borsad, where they had been putting pumping machinery into a large Baoli well. These "baolis" are peculiar to Guzerat: there is a very fine specimen of them at Raj Mahal, close to the stables, called the *Naulakhi Well*, from its having cost nine lakhs of rupees, or £60,000.

Murray gives as much space to this well in his Handbook as he does to all the rest of Baroda put together, and it is a picturesque and stately building. Above the level of the ground are five open pavilions of octagonal form at regular distances from each other, their roofs being supported by columns. The entrance to the well is by one of the end pavilions, from which a flight of broad steps descends to a landing under the second dome, which is now seen to be supported by two rows of columns, one over the other. The descent continues stage by stage, the number of columns increasing at each pavilion until the level of the water is reached. You are now far beneath the ground, below are the cool dark waters of the deep well, above your head the mysterious

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lights and shadows of the beautifully adorned columns and galleries which support the last dome, which is about eighty yards away from the first one.

The well at Borsad was quite as large, and the decoration almost as fine. It was strange to see the modern machinery gleaming in its depths and to hear the purring of the engines when the Gaekwar had set them in motion. The streets were completely blocked by the biggest crowd we have yet seen, and though we had a mounted escort it was only with the greatest difficulty that we could get along; in one place Slowcoach and I were cut off and had to be rescued. The town was gaily decorated with flags, and they had put up a large marquee, where we had refreshments and the usual floral business. These western touches were no doubt due to a Scottish missionary, Mr. Henderson, who seems to exercise a good influence in the place and with whom the Gaekwar had a long conversation.

There was a very pretty school in an old caravan-serai, built round a courtyard with a temple in the middle, where Maharaja held a little examination, sitting at the teacher's table with his spectacles on, hearing the children read from English books and putting questions to them on Indian history.

We had such a jolly ride back to Baroda. The intention had been to return by train, but Maharaja, who delights in giving pleasure to others and always

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encourages any sporting proposal, fell in at once with my suggestion that we should go on horseback. It was all arranged with that wonderful quickness which surprises you so much out here. A change of horses was sent on ahead and a wire sent to Baroda for another relay to be sent out from there. We were to start as soon as it was light, and with the first glimmer of dawn the Gaekwar appeared, booted and spurred, mounted a big powerful horse and set off at once at a quick canter which he soon changed for a full gallop.

It is not, of course, etiquette for any one else to mount until he is in the saddle, but as I am such an awful duffer, he kindly makes an exception in my favour, and as I was riding Mattine I managed to keep up with him fairly well. With us were Nimbalker and Vaniker, the latter on a vicious-looking brute, which he had been feeding up for any emergency of this kind and which he had some difficulty in managing.

The road was lovely, ideal for riding, with a good deal of turf and through very pretty country, and orders had been sent overnight to the villagers to water it, so far as they could, in the more sandy places. When I reached the first stage the Maharaja was just disappearing round the bend of the road, and I saw him no more. It was not long, however, before I came across poor Vaniker lying in the road with a big cut over his eye and no trace of his

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vicious horse ; I stayed with him as long as I could, and when he had recovered a little, left my groom with him and went on alone with Slowcoach, who seemed to have no doubt about finding his way.

We took things very easily and I was beginning to wonder if we should ever reach anywhere, when I saw a familiar tank with a temple in the middle of it and knew that we were at Domad. My friends the elephants had all gone into the city, to make themselves smart for a big *tamasha* on the morrow (that is another most useful word, meaning a big show) and the place looked very desolate without them. My third horse was waiting here, Mirag Raj, a beautiful chestnut, belonging to Her Highness, who sometimes allows me to ride him. They had put a new saddle and bridle on him, which bothered me rather, so I pretended that I was in a great hurry and let him go his own pace ; luckily, no one got in the way and we had not to pass through the city, so there was no mishap ; but it was warm work and I slept like a top all the afternoon.

The next day was a great Mohammedan festival, when the fast of *Ramazan*, which lasts for a month, comes to an end. The Gaekwar has a good many Mohammedan subjects, whom he treats in every respect on equal terms with those of his own religion, and on this occasion he had promised to attend the festival in state, with a procession of elephants. As he knows how greatly I admire these beasts, he

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suggested that I should ride one myself, and take a carriage as well, as I might find the elephant too tiring. So off I drove with a native gentleman, and just outside the city we found the elephant waiting, not a very big one, only about twelve feet high! He knelt down, a ladder was put against his back, and we scrambled up, and then held on tight to the side of the howdah, while he got on his feet again, which gives you the impression of being in a ship during a very bad storm. The howdah was flat with a silver railing round it, and a cushioned floor. Unless you are sitting cross-legged it is not a comfortable way of getting along, as it makes your legs very stiff, and rather sore.

Presently we reached the mosque where the solemnity was to take place, a large square court surrounded by a low wall, the holy place being surmounted by a dome, but open to the view of all the worshippers. It was crowded with people wearing head-dresses of all the colours under the sun, and presented a most brilliant and animated spectacle, of which I had an excellent view from the back of my elephant. Several men inside recognized me and came to speak to me over the wall. We had not very long to wait before the great procession came into view, and a fine sight it was.

An advance guard of cavalry was followed by a troop of brilliantly dressed Sirdars also mounted on horseback, and then one after another the lordly

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elephants came majestically. They all had their faces and trunks painted with an elaborate design of blue and yellow, carried gold or silver ornaments, and were hung with long gold embroideries, their riders sitting in howdahs of every conceivable shape. As they arrived, they drew up on either side of the gateway of the mosque, and then, advancing slowly through this imposing body-guard, came the Maharaja. I had sometimes said, when we were in Europe, that I should like to see him, just once, in full royal state. His eyes glanced keenly over the crowd until he found me, and then, as he returned my salute, he fixed upon me a long, steady look, which said as plainly as possible, "Well, you have seen me at last; so take a good look at me while you have the chance." He was magnificently dressed, a great plume of diamonds waving above his puggari, a splendid collar of pearls and diamonds hanging round his neck, the Star of India blazing with jewels on his breast, and priceless rings flashing on his hands, as with one he returned the salutes of his subjects, and with the other grasped his jewelled sword-hilt. He was mounted on an enormous elephant decorated with a massive gold necklace, gold cases for his tusks, gold anklets and ear-rings—an elephant's ear-ring being the size of a breast-plate—and golden bells. From his back to the ground hung a wonderful piece of cloth of gold, the size of a large drawing-room carpet.

Only a few of the elephants can bear the weight



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of the golden *ambari* or throne, for the carrying of which they have to be specially fed; it is as big as a small motor-car and it takes twenty-four strong men to lift it on to the elephant's back. Behind the Maharaja stood two attendants, one holding over his head the large golden umbrella, the other waving a fan of ostrich plumes.

As soon as the Gaekwar had taken his place, the prayers and selections from the Koran began within the mosque, and it was most impressive to see the vast throng bending, at stated places, as one man to the ground, like a field of ripe corn swept by the wind.

When the short service was over, the priest came to be presented to the Maharaja and to receive from him the accustomed offerings, as much stuff as would make him a robe and a turban. Then from a field beyond the mosque a royal salute was fired by the big guns, a critical time for me, as my elephant, who had behaved beautifully up to this point, had evidently not been trained to cannon, and trembled like a young earthquake at each explosion. The mahout had some difficulty to keep him in order by striking him over the head every time with his heavy iron ankus. The poor beast must have gone to bed that night with a very sore skull. Then, amid great cheering and the strains of the Baroda Anthem, the procession moved slowly away, the comic relief being afforded by a very small Sirdar, gorgeously dressed, who got left behind and was very angry because he

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could not find his servant and did not like being laughed at by the crowd.

I had fondly hoped to make a triumphal return to Raj Mahal on my elephant, the admiration of all beholders, but it was not to be. We had not got very far on our way before things began to look rather out of perspective, and I began to suspect that our howdah was slipping off the elephant's back. My companion spoke very little English, and when I mentioned it to him he merely smiled amiably. We went on a little, and the howdah went on slipping, so I spoke to him again about it. He thought I said the elephant was *sleeping*, and proceeded to prove to me at some length that he was not. "Our elephants out here do not walk while they sleep." When I tried again he pulled himself together and gave me an elaborate dissertation on the habits of the elephant: "Sometimes he will sleep while he lies stretched out upon the grass," and so on.

By this time two of the javelin men were hanging on to the girths to adjust the balance, and it was obvious that we should soon be lying stretched out upon the road with an unmanageable elephant jumping about on top, so I made it quite clear that I had no further use for him and sent for my carriage, reaching that harbour of refuge not without peril, as they insisted on bringing the horses right up to the elephant, so that the Sahib might be saved the trouble of walking a few yards, making them plunge

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and kick and very nearly bolt. Even these radiant clouds of glory have their darker side. The Gaekwar roared with laughter when I told him about it, and said that I should be remembered in India for many a long year as the eccentric Sahib who had conscientious objections to riding a sleeping elephant.

We had one more district to visit, and went on there after a few days' rest. Maharaja was getting a little tired of deputations, and was in two minds about going; but they held out the inducement that there were numerous herds of wild boar in the country, and, as he had not had any pig-sticking for some time and wanted me to see the sport, that settled it.

The camp was pitched near to the railway and a few miles from the village of Dubka, where there is one of the oldest of the royal palaces. We went over to see it the next morning, and found a long, rambling house, two stories high, built round a courtyard, and containing a great number of low-ceilinged rooms with narrow staircases and passages leading from one to another. Although the architecture was not nearly so beautiful, it reminded me in many ways of Haddon Hall. The rooms were full of funny old-fashioned furniture that had evidently not been used for years, but from the west wing of the house there was one of the most glorious views you ever saw, over mile after mile of undulating plain and wood-

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land, and right in front the rugged sides of a romantic ravine, which ended in the peaceful waters of a broad river, gleaming in the distance like a great belt of silver. I told the Gaekwar that I wondered he did not do the place up a bit and make it one of his favourite residences, as it is not very far from Baroda, but, like Dr. Johnson's too persistent friend, I was left wondering.

After interviewing the huntsmen, we went back again to the camp, where Maharaja spent a very busy afternoon, as the reports about master pig were so good that his mouth began to water for the sport, and he was anxious to get all necessary business over as soon as possible, which was the more easily done as the magistrate in charge of the district was a very capable man, with a London degree and any amount of experience. At the festival the week before, the Gaekwar had invited one of his Mohammedan friends to come with us, a fine old sportsman called Mohammed Ali, which sounds magnificent, but which, for all I know, may be as common a name out here as John Jones is at home. I had often seen him before, as he is a constant attendant at Maharaja's Friday levées, and often comes for a drive with us, when he and I crack many a joke together at one another's expense, to the amusement of the Gaekwar, who acts as interpreter. He is a fine old fellow, with a large nose and bushy brows over keen, twinkling eyes, and he is so seldom out of the saddle that his

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legs are quite bent, as though he were bow-legged, which makes him stoop a good deal as he walks.

We had great fun together at dinner that evening, Maharaja trying to persuade him to taste a dish of bacon, which would be against the rules of his religion. He was very amusing about it, and ended by saying that though he could not eat ham with us, he could eat mustard, making a play on the words in Arabic which pleased the Gaekwar very much. His Highness at one time used to eschew ham and bacon, an ancient prejudice of his house, but tasting it once by accident, he found it so good that he has now grown very fond of it, and we often have a dish of ham and eggs at breakfast.

In his youthful days Mohammed had been not a little proud of his wealth, and when a former Maharaja asked him how much he had, he replied that if His Highness went to war he would supply him with gold and silver cannon-balls for one year. The Gaekwar now began to chaff him about this unlucky boast, and his evasive answers were most comical and ingenious. However well off these old fellows may be, they always make out that they have not a penny to bless themselves with. They love to hoard their rupees, and have inherited an instinct of concealment from the days when it was not wise to be too rich. Old Kaka himself is a case in point; he is really most comfortably off, but at night one small oil lamp burns in his suburban villa, and his

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garden gate is a perfect disgrace, just two wooden hurdles tied to the gate-posts with bits of old rope. It is no use talking to him about it, as he only gnaws his beard and changes the subject.

When we left the Gaekwar's tent together, I suggested to Mohammed that he should come to mine and have a peg before turning in; but the wily old bird was not to be caught with such transparent chaff, and went off chuckling, though you may bet that he knows how many glasses go to a bottle.

Very early the next morning we were up and driving to Dubka, where we found preparations for the chase going busily along. In the midst of an army of beaters were half a dozen hardy and game little horses, active, well-bred Arabs, rather short, but stoutly built. Maharaja and Mohammed were soon in the saddle, grasping long spears with light bamboo shafts, some seven feet long, with a flat four-inch blade at the end. During our drive the Gaekwar had been coaching me very solemnly as to what I had better do if the boar attacked me, and Mohammed had his revenge for my levity of the evening before by assuring me that in the company of such experienced *shikaris* it was not likely that I should come to any serious harm; so it was a welcome surprise to find that the local elephant was ready for me, on which I could follow with the beaters.

Off we went through beautiful country, more like an English park than anything I have yet seen here,

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and presently reached a covert where they knew a boar was hiding. While the beating was going on we kept very quiet, and as far as possible out of sight. We must have waited for nearly half an hour, and it got more exciting every minute. At last he came out, looking suspiciously about him, and trotted leisurely over the plain, stopping every now and then to have a look round.

When he had got a good long start, Maharaja suddenly called out "Ride!" and away they went. As soon as the pig saw them in full pursuit, he made off at great speed, covering the ground in fine style and with a most curious action, as though he were tumbling head over heels like a porpoise. When the riders got near him he kept jumping from one side to the other, throwing them out, so that they were several lengths to the bad again. But at last, after a gallop of a little over a mile, he was gradually out-paced, and Maharaja, levelling his spear for action, got in a good thrust which disabled him. The others were up almost immediately and he was soon given the *coup de grâce*.

Four other pigs were ridden in the course of the morning and afforded a great variety of sport, each of them behaving differently from the others. One of them managed to gain a good covert of thick bushes, where he fought very obstinately and courageously, and was only killed after a very fierce struggle; another when he had ridden quite a short distance

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suddenly turned round and charged the horses, but was soon brought to the ground by a well-directed thrust from Mohammed's spear. Only one got away: he just managed to gain the side of the ravine in time, and went plunging over it regardless of what was before him. I quite expected to see his mangled corpse stretched on the rocks below; but, no—there he was galloping away none the worse for his adventure, so far as one could see, though he must have fallen some forty feet.

The next day Sampatrao joined the party, and the day after Nimbalker took a spear as well, so the scene was much more animated. They had six or seven runs each morning and nearly always secured their pig. On the second day they had one very exciting gallop after a very game pig, who gave them a four-mile chase and succeeded in reaching the river, when he plunged in and swam across.

On the last day there was a very amusing incident: they were after a large powerful pig, who was very lively and kept jumping about all over the place. At last Mohammed got within spear's length and pricked it, but without doing it any serious damage. It soon came within Maharaja's reach, and he was just preparing his spear for action, when suddenly he raised it above his head and they all stopped, while the pig scuttled away into safety. It then appeared that she was a sow and not a boar, and that Mohammed had been misled by the fine "moustache" which the old

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lady sported. The Gaekwar, bubbling over with merriment, in which we all joined, smacked him heartily on the back as he chaffed him about his mistake, and the old sportsman was not a little confused at having been caught napping.

My elephant behaved admirably the whole time, never once getting at all in the way of the riders and yet giving me a splendid view of the proceedings. I only wish I had been able to take a more active part in them myself, but though I was more or less prepared to "die," I should have had very little idea what to "do," and in these matters a tyro is even a greater source of danger to his companions than he is to himself.

On one of these days an embassy arrived from the Maharaja of Jodhpur announcing his approaching marriage and inviting the Gaekwar to be present at it. One of the rooms in Maharaja's tent was turned into a little Durbar hall, and he received the guests after dinner with all due form and ceremony. The letter itself was beautifully illuminated, and was enclosed in a long bag of red silk embroidered with gold and closed at the mouth with a heavy seal of wax.

The Rajputs were fine handsome fellows, magnificently dressed, and Maharaja gave them a long audience, which was brought to an end with the usual garlands, bouquets and attar of roses. They then retired to their tents, where they spent the rest of the evening

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by themselves in mirth and song: distinctions of caste have a great hold over these conservative peoples.

Maharaja gave orders that the bag should be given to me as an interesting souvenir, but I have not received it yet, as I believe it has to pass first through the Clothing Department, and there will be many people ready to lay hands on it on the way. They dare not disobey Maharaja's orders, but if they can evade them by delay and red tape they will do so most unblushingly. However, as I have given the seal to Nimbalker, who begged that he might have it to add to his collection, I shall give him no peace until he has got the bag for me.

It is the same with all one's dealings with these officials; they are so crafty that you can only get the better of them by infinite patience and a firm determination to have your own way in the end. No wonder that the Gaekwar groans over them and that even his wonderful patience is sometimes sorely tried.

Maharaja would have liked to pursue pig for several days longer, but Maharani and Indira were returning from Lucknow, where they had been staying for some weeks, and he wished to be at Raj Mahal to receive them, so we returned to Baroda. After dinner Shivajirao drove me down to the station to meet them. A number of the Gaekwar's servants were there carrying a large canopy with curtains hanging down to the ground. When the train came in, this

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was taken up to the door of their saloon, and after they had received our greetings they walked beneath it along the platform to their motor-car, completely screened from hundreds of eyes gazing eagerly from the train when it was heard that a Princess was passing.

I drove back with Kaka, who had been with them and was in great spirits, having all his pockets crammed with the betel-nut of Lucknow, which is very good.

This light-hearted patriarch has now invented a new game; in future I am to be his "mother," and he is to be my "child." So at dinner he asks me what he may eat and comes round the table afterwards to be fed with sweetmeats; and if I see an amusing toy in the market, I bring it home for him. He shows great ingenuity in playing upon this fancy in a hundred quaint ways, which amuse Maharani and Indira immensely; Maharaja looking on with the contemptuous benevolence with which he would regard a couple of amiable lunatics, not quite bad enough to be packed off to the county asylum.

We spent the afternoon after their return sitting on the grass at the rifle-range on the banks of the river; there are butts on the other side, traps for throwing up clay pigeons, bottles floating down the stream, running men and deer, and many other things of that kind on which a marksman may exercise his skill. Maharani is very fond of this amusement and

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went on shooting for hours without growing tired of it. When we had finished, we walked and drove about the park looking at the various temples which are enclosed in it, some of which are very interesting. The most beautiful of them all is a wonderful piece of Mohammedan architecture, quite close to Raj Mahal, of which Her Highness has a lovely view from her windows.

Surrounded by an old-fashioned garden and shaded by a grove of trees, a broad flight of steps leads to a spacious platform, from which another staircase ascends to the delicately carved canopies which cover the beautiful marble tombs of departed saints; beyond these is a peaceful terrace, ending in a low parapet, standing twenty feet above the level of the park, of which a beautiful view is seen. It would make a perfect summer-house, and in England we should undoubtedly use it as such, but in India they have much more religious feeling than we have, and the tombs of bygone worthies are sacred spots, undisturbed, save by the gentle hand of Time.

As I wanted to have a closer look at the jewels which the Gaekwar was wearing the other day, he asked me to come to his dressing-room before dinner, where he would have them laid out. I often spend half an hour there, as the Maharaja is such a busy man that sometimes the only chance of getting a few words with him alone is when he is changing. It is a most charming room, with plenty of books and



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comfortable chairs in it, and the walls are lined with spacious wardrobes, in which are neatly arranged everything that you could possibly want in the way of clothing.

A door on one side leads to a beautiful bath-room with every modern comfort, and beyond this again is the room over which his barber presides, fitted with machine brushes, shampoo basins and every requisite for an elaborate toilet.

I have never known any man so careful of his personal appearance as the Gaekwar; he always looks as though he had come straight out of a band-box, perfectly shaved, brushed, washed and manicured. The only thing which causes him any trouble is his moustache, which wants to grow long and which he prefers to keep short, but even this has to submit to the stern discipline which he inflicts upon it. However often he may have to change his clothes during the day, a complete set of fresh linen is always ready, and his "harness," as the native servants call his English kit, is most carefully kept.

The various pieces of jewellery were all laid out in their cases, under shaded lamps, and I had ample time to examine them while the Gaekwar told me their history. While he is being dressed, two servants hold a sheet before him, so that he can talk to me without being seen.

In this matter of having access to him whenever I like, I am the most privileged person in the palace,

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and naturally am regarded with a good deal of jealousy. He knows this perfectly well and this evening gave me an amusing instance of it. Some of the officials had come to him with long faces, to represent that the mosaic pavement in the Durbar hall was being worn away, in consequence of people being in the habit of crossing it in boots. This was obviously aimed at me, as I often come in that way after riding, and am one of the few people in the palace who wear boots. "There are no bounds to the ignorance and stupidity of these fellows," says Maharaja. "Let us send for Kaka and hear what he has to say about it, he is sure to have some wonderful piece of advice to offer."

Kaka presently appeared and the following conversation took place:

Maharaja: "Kaka, I am informed that the costly pavement in my splendid hall is being spoilt by certain ill-mannered people crossing it in their boots, what do you advise me to do?"

Kaka (promptly): "Shut up the porch, Maharaja."

Maharaja: "Yes, I might do that, but then how are people to enter the palace from that side?"

Kaka: "Build another one."

Maharaja: "Where should I build it?"

Kaka: "Where the entrance to the medicine room now is."

Maharaja: "But that would cost a great deal of money."

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Kaka (enormously impressed by this objection):

“Have a tin one.”

Maharaja: “O Kaka, how could I tack a tin porch on to my beautiful palace?”

Kaka (suddenly struck by an inspiration): “Gild it, Maharaja!”

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THE Maharaja had promised that I should see some of the ancient and historic cities of India, and he now suddenly proposed that I should set out on my travels. There were several good reasons for this; there was nothing much going on in Baroda, the cold weather would soon be coming to an end, and the Gaekwar himself had an engagement to attend the prize-giving at the Mayo College at Ajmer, and thought it would be nice for us to travel so far together, after which I could continue my wanderings with the assistance of my faithful Sanka, who was delighted at the prospect, as he is an ardent student of Indian history, and has not yet travelled so far afield as we propose to go. My own pleasure was tinged with regret at parting again from Her Highness and Princess Indira so soon after their return to us. However, as they are so fond of saying here, "there was no help."

The morning before we left, I was awakened by weird strains of music, and running on to the balcony saw a large company of native performers sitting on the ground before the Zenana Porch, making a most

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joyful uproar, sackbut, psaltery and dulcimer hard at it, with the lordly shawm dominating the whole. There was no time that I could distinguish, and they all seemed to be playing different tunes, and yet the general effect was eminently pleasing and stimulating. Indians have a very quaint fancy that certain melodies are suited to certain times in the day; they have morning music and night music, and it would be almost painful to them to hear an evening song played earlier in the day. I have tried hard to grasp the idea, but have not succeeded. There was no doubt, however, that this music was of a joyous, festal nature, and I soon found out that it was in honour of Indira's birthday; she is just sixteen and grows in loveliness and grace every day.

The Hindu Calendar is very imperfect and the months fall at slightly different times every year, but many of the more advanced people adopt the European method. It was, of course, a holiday, and Indira and Maharani had breakfast with us, which they do not often do.

I was very anxious to give her a present, but it is not an easy thing to find at short notice for a girl who already has everything she can possibly want. In England you could always get flowers, but in Baroda you would search for a florist's shop in vain. At last I bethought me of some lace handkerchiefs which I bought at Port Said, poor stuff, but the best I had to offer; she would only take one of them just to

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remind her that it was my gift, but so graciously that she almost made me believe that nothing else could have given her more pleasure.

When I went to my rooms that night, Sanka was nowhere to be seen, and not a bit of my packing had been done; they told me that he had been spending the evening at his home and that he would be back in a moment, but after waiting nearly an hour for him I went to bed.

Between three and four o'clock in the morning, I heard someone moving about, so I called out, and the rascal appeared, looking very guilty and saying that he had nearly finished my luggage. As we were to start soon after five, and as I was quite sure that he could not possibly have done it right by himself, I got up and dressed and then inspected his work. Of course, it was all wrong, everything that I did not want, nothing that I did want. I was very angry and made him do it all over again, while I sat in an arm-chair and made sarcastic remarks till I had reduced him to a becoming state of penitence. At last, falling on his knees with tears in his eyes, he made confession of his sin: "You may beat me, Sahib, you may slay me with the sword, but I have deserved it all." Furious though I was, I could not help laughing, and gave him absolution, and he has been as good as gold ever since.

We got some more sleep in the train until we reached Ahmedabad, where we had breakfast. We

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were quite a small party, as the Gaekwar had brought only two officers with him, Nimbalker and Shivraj Sinhji, the latter because he is a Rajput and we were going into Rajputana.

We beguiled the morning with books and magazines, but there were constant interruptions as we were still passing through the Gaekwar's territory, and the stations were crowded with people who wanted to see him, until at last we reached Mehsana, an important place, as it is the junction for three branch lines constructed by the Gaekwar. Here there was an extraordinary scene on the platform, which was so closely packed with people that they could hardly move but surged about in one great swaying mass: all the local officials were there, followed by servants carrying on their heads large baskets full of fruit and sweetmeats which they had brought to offer to His Highness. Luckily for us, most of these suffered shipwreck on the way, and even then every compartment and corridor of the saloon was packed, like a grocer's shop, with the things that reached their destination.

The servants must have had a grand time, but we ourselves were starving in the midst of plenty, for we reached the place just before luncheon time and an hour passed before we could get away again, with the result that the huge crowds gathered outside the station to salute their Maharaja were disappointed, except the lucky few who happened to catch a

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glimpse of a hungry man very much engaged with his soup-plate. Just outside the town we passed an enormous building of red brick, with stone facings. I asked the Gaekwar what it was, and he replied politely but rather wearily that it was another of his palaces.

From this point the country became gradually more bare and wild, as the fertile glades of Guzerat gave place to the rocky sands of Rajputana. The air became colder as we gradually ascended, and after tea we were glad to pull the blinds down on the desolate scene, turn up the lights and play bridge until at last we reached Ajmer, rather late in the evening, where we were the guests of the British Commissioner and his wife, very kind people, who made us extremely comfortable and gave us a very amusing time.

The Commissioner's house is one of a noble range of marble pavilions, built by the Emperor Shah Jehan on the bank of a beautiful lake called the Ana Saugar; the others are used as public offices, except a very fine one in the centre which was often used by the emperor himself, and which has been restored to something of its original splendour. There is a delightful walk along one side of the lake, with a public garden beyond it: altogether a very pleasant spot.

I am going to try not to weary you with endless descriptions of what I see during my little tour. Guide-books are excellent to read after you get home

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again, but unless you have seen the places yourself they are not very exciting.

If you want more details, there is a capital book by Reynolds Ball, which will give them to you and some pretty photographs as well. So I will just tell you shortly about the most interesting places I come across, and then if you feel inclined to pursue the subject further, you can do so. Ajmer ought to interest you because Mason describes it so well in "The Broken Road," which you liked so much.

In the morning we went to see a Mohammedan mosque, built out of the materials of a beautiful Jain temple and called "The Hut of two and a half days," from a tradition that it was miraculously built in that time. Three parts of it are gone for ever, but what is left is very lovely, a glorious screen of seven arches rising in the centre to a height of fifty feet, and behind this over a hundred slender columns, all beautifully decorated yet no two being alike, support the nine domes which form the roof.

Later in the day we visited the Dargah, the burial-place of one of a large family of famous saints, and a lovely place of hallowed peace it seems as you enter it from the noisy, crowded street, with its spacious courts, in which the arches and domes of mosques and tombs of white marble are grouped in admired disorder under the shadow of stately trees.

On either side of the gateway are the two gigantic

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cauldrons which rich pilgrims sometimes fill with a feast for their poorer brethren and the guardians of the shrine, and at the end of the enclosure is the deep ravine, with steep flights of steps cut out of the rock on which the women talk in low, monotonous voices, while they fill their pitchers from the stream below.

Most of the next day was spent at the Mayo College, where many of the young Rajput princes are educated. The large hall of the handsome white marble building was full of the usual speech-day crowd, with a platform at the end, on which were tables covered with books and masters in gowns and hoods, and you might almost have imagined yourself at an English public school, had it not been for the brilliant dresses of the pupils, nearly a hundred fine handsome boys of the usual school ages, many of whom recited very well in English, Persian, Sanscrit and Hindi. The speeches were brought to a close by a dear little Maharaja, about eight years old, with a beautiful face and handsome flashing eyes, looking like some gorgeous humming bird in his magnificent apparel, who recited in shrill, clear tones that could be heard all over the hall, a little rhyme beginning:

“I am a little boy, I am not very old.”

and ending:

“Work while you work, play while you play,
That is the way to be happy and gay.”

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After which, he ran jumping with joy to a lady in the audience, who took him on to her lap and covered him with kisses, while the burst of cheering from the other boys showed how popular he was with them all.

After luncheon there were sports, consisting chiefly of tent-pegging and other competitions on horseback. Many of the boys rode beautifully, especially one whose complexion was so light that I thought he might perhaps be an Englishman. He was, however, a native who had spent several years in England. In one of the races they had to gallop to the end of the ground, dismount and pick up a nosegay, and then mount again and ride back to give the flowers to a group of ladies who were waiting for them: on the return journey, this boy dropped off right at his lady's feet, letting his horse go on at full gallop, and won the race easily.

The races for the small boys were very amusing and pretty to watch: in one of them they were formed into teams of six "horses" in each and "driven" by another boy behind over small fences which they had to jump. The little Maharaja who had bidden us "play while you play" got so "happy and gay" in this race, that his *fetah* became unfolded until there were yards and yards of it floating behind him, which were picked up by his servant, a dear old man who seemed to be devoted to him.

The refreshments were provided by the Maharaja

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of Jodhpur, who was there all the afternoon, looking frightfully melancholy and bored.

We had a very pleasant dinner at the Commissioner's that night, just the four of us, as Shivraj Sinhji had carried off Nimbalker to spend the evening with some of his countrymen; and when the Gaekwar went to bed, he took me to his room and gave me letters of introduction to such of the Indian Princes as I might come across in my tour.

The next day I went down to the station, to speed him on his way back to Baroda, and shortly afterwards set off myself with Sanka on my own travels, and found myself the next morning in Udaipur, the capital of the ancient state of Mewar and a wonderfully beautiful place.

After breakfast at the hotel, we drove through a fortified gateway in the bastioned wall, and were soon climbing the narrow staircase of the Prime Minister's house. I found him sitting in the middle of a small crowd of hangers-on, a grave, handsome man trying ineffectually to conceal the curiosity and suspicion that passed alternately over his face as we talked. He could not speak a word of English, but Sanka made an excellent interpreter. It was most comical to see them examining my letter of introduction, of which none of them could make head or tail; finally, Sanka gave them a very free rendering of it, taking pains to impress on them that I was a most distinguished person, a sort of Archbishop, in comparison

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with whom the Gaekwar held the light of the sun very cheap indeed. The Minister swallowed as much of this as he thought fit and replied that, unfortunately, the Maharana was away from home on a pilgrimage, having taken four thousand people with him and all the best carriages. He would, however, be delighted to do all that he could for me under the circumstances and would have a sheaf of orders prepared, which would enable me to see most things. While this was being done, he gave me an excellent cigarette, while I admired his house and told him what mine was like in England. At last the orders were ready, several dozen of them on separate sheets, all of which he had to sign. When he had finished, merely to please him, I asked if he would give me his autograph as a keepsake. This made him frightfully suspicious; no doubt he thought I wanted it as a kind of blank cheque, to be filled in for some nefarious purpose. At last he wrote it very reluctantly on the smallest bit of paper he could find, which even my episcopal ingenuity would find it hard to manipulate.

Meanwhile a carriage and pair had been found for me in the royal stables and we drove to the palace, which stands at the end of the main street of the city. Two gates, between which are the carved arches under which each Maharaja has been weighed against gold and silver afterwards distributed in *largette*, lead to the great courtyard, where the

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elephant fights take place; with its elephant stables, flocks of pigeons and motley crowd of men and animals, it has a strikingly mediæval look.

The palace itself is an imposing quadrangular pile of granite and marble, one side of it rising sheer from the waters of the lake. It is all extremely picturesque, and a good deal of it is beautifully decorated. The principal rooms are on the top storey and are approached by broad terraces, and the views from the windows of the lake with its islands covered with gardens and pavilions and of the mountains beyond are superb.

After spending over two hours in the palace, we descended a steep and narrow causeway which brought us to the lake, where a large, comfortable boat, with several rowers, was waiting for us. From the water we were able to form a better idea of the magnificence of the palace which has been called the Windsor of India. You will smile to hear that on this side the great marble walls have all been white-washed, but under the brilliant sun this only adds to their dazzling splendour.

We landed on two of the islands. On the second there is a wonderful water-gate, guarded by marble elephants, rising from the water and leading to a most beautiful pavilion. The gardens were full of orange trees laden with golden fruit, and as by this time I was very thirsty, I could have done with an orange very well. Unfortunately, I thought it would

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be more polite to ask if I might have one, and the reply was decisive, "There is no order." However, they brought some water, with which I washed my mouth and hands.

At the further side of the lake we landed and walked up to a tower in the woods, in the midst of which is a great pit, where boar and tiger meet in mortal combat, and I was surprised to hear that the honours of war not unfrequently go to the boar. While we were standing on the top of the tower, the attendant uttered a peculiar cry and began to throw down food from a basket. In a few moments, boars came pouring out from the woods on all sides, till there were at least five hundred of them below us, grunting and fighting for their food amid clouds of dust from which rose a very strong smell of pig.

As we rowed back towards the palace, its white walls flushed with the sunset and reflected in the water and the marble-capped islands in the foreground presented a scene of surpassing loveliness. Crossing the lake, we landed, and were driven through woods full of peacocks and parrots to the public gardens, where we stopped to look at the wild animals.

As I was dressing for dinner, a little accident happened, which afforded an instance of the stoical fortitude which is part of the Indian character. My rooms were lit by primitive oil-lamps, one of which smoked very badly, so I called for the servant to put

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it right; as he was muddling with it, it exploded into a sheet of flame, and he picked it up and carried it away downstairs, blazing as it was, without a word. He was badly burned, but he was waiting at the dinner-table, and though his hands were bandaged, no sign of the severe pain, which he must have been feeling, appeared on his face.

I sat next to an amusing old Irishman, who had been going about India for the last five years, selling cheap packets of Lipton's teas, to which the natives are taking very kindly; even in this remote corner of the earth he said he had been doing very well.

Next day we drove to the Maharana's private gardens, which are some distance from the town. The pavilion has several beautiful courtyards in which there are fountains, the water pouring out from the trunks of elephants. The gardens were fairly good, and they gave me some flowers, for which a special order had probably been signed, to make up for my disappointment in the matter of oranges, and no doubt all my movements had been minutely described to the minister.

"Gup" is an even greater word in India than gossip is in England, and you have either to be extremely careful or else absolutely careless of what you do and say, as the words which you speak in your secret chamber are all over the palace, the city and the camp by the next day.

We had a pleasant drive home round by the lakes and



A HINDU TEMPLE

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through the town, where we saw the great Jagganath Temple, standing high at the top of a fine staircase. At the side of the temple was a curious gargoyle, through which water was trickling, and Sanka explained that the god had been taking his bath. I asked him why he did not drink some of the water as others were doing, and he told me that he could not do so as he had not yet had his own bath, but that he was coming back later. In the town he bought a large piece of sugar-cane which he used as a walking-stick; it was gradually broken up and eaten, getting smaller every day.

Before leaving Udaipur, I called again on the minister to thank him for his kind attentions and to ask him to make arrangements so that I might see everything at Chitorgarh comfortably, which he promised to do. When we reached the station at Chitorgarh there was quite a little stir on the platform and the station-master coming up with profuse salaams handed me a long telegram beginning "Reserve elephant for Padre Demon"! The minister had been even more impressed by my diabolical powers than I had suspected. However, the elephant was there all right, and very glad I was to have him, as we had to cover two miles of the worst road I have ever seen.

Before us rose the walls of the magnificent fort crowning a hill three miles long and five hundred feet high. As we crossed the massive bridge of grey

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limestone with its ten pointed arches and saw great masses of its parapet and towers lying in the trickling stream below, it was hard to imagine them being swept there by the flooded torrent.

Passing through the narrow streets of the village, we began to ascend the long winding road which leads to the summit defended by seven magnificent gateways, each one the scene of desperate encounters when the Mohammedans besieged the place in the early years of the fourteenth century for love of the beautiful queen Padmani. For eleven days the battle raged and eleven royal princes, each made Rana for one day, fell in the valiant defence; and then when all was lost, Padmani and her faithful women cast themselves into the flames, and the last of the Rajputs fell before the swords of the invaders.

All this was told me by Sanka in hushed tones as we climbed the hill, and when we reached the top we made our way to the lonely tarn, full of romance and mystery, where stands the palace in which the last tragedy was enacted, and gazed with reverential awe upon the underground chamber in the bower where the hapless princess gave her body to the fire.

Sanka was greatly moved at the sight, and in the evening, when he was putting me to bed, he said, "When I saw what I had so long hoped to see, her tower, her tank; when I thought of our beautiful queen coming to so miserable a death, then did I

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shed tears from my eyes." He spends his spare moments sitting on the floor writing an account of our journey for one of the Poona papers, a striking example of what the Gaekwar is accomplishing by his system of education. He is an ideal companion for sight-seeing, as whatever you want to do interests him enormously, and he never wants to be doing anything else. He never speaks unless you speak to him first, listens with reverential admiration to any commonplace remark you are pleased to make, and supplies unexpected and original ideas himself.

Unlike the majority of the natives, who grate frightfully on your nerves when they speak English, he has a pleasant musical voice, which is very soothing, he smiles sweetly and frequently, and his laugh is very good to hear. He is naturally imitative, and so far as he can takes the Maharaja, to whom he is devotedly attached, as his model, to his no small advantage. He was perfectly content to linger with me for hours on the summit of this wonderful hill, abounding with the ruins of old temples and palaces, above which the two graceful Jain towers of Fame and Victory soar like two shafts of golden sunlight.

Deep and dark beneath the walls of the great temple is a beautiful pool, shadowed by ancient trees, among the roots of which the queen of the serpents must surely be slumbering in all the glory of her jewelled head; and near at hand is the sacred grove

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where the bones of the Ranas of Mewar, who reigned here for centuries before Udaipur was founded, were burned. I had fears for my own bones when the mere child who was driving our elephant dropped his *ankus* on the steepest part of the descent; but the dear beast, instead of bolting and dashing us over the precipice, stopped quickly, picked it up with his trunk and handed it up most politely.

Dreamily fashioning a ballade with the refrain, "The lovely lady Padmani," I fell asleep peacefully enough in the comfortable saloon, which the powers that be had provided for the Padre Demon, but in the small hours my slumbers were rudely disturbed by a tornado of luggage which came hurtling in, followed by a volcanic Englishman in full eruption. Never before have I seen such an appalling apparition. The wheel of torture which he brandished in his right hand proclaimed him dentist, and everything else proclaimed him lunatic in the throes of delirium tremens. The worms on whom he had been exercising his fiendish trade had turned at last, and were expelling him from their midst, and as they plumped him down on the centre of my anatomy, I understood that an inscrutable destiny had chosen me as the unwilling vehicle of his deportation. Then they fled, the recreant guard blew his whistle and we sped away together into the night.

For half an hour I humoured him, and we hobnobbed

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together over cases of homicidal instruments and chests of deadly drugs, and then when he sprang up to battle with invisible foes, I managed to crawl away and wake up Sanka, who was sleeping next door. Between us we kept him in hand through the weary hours, cheating him of his weapons one by one, and rescuing Sanka's sugar-cane, with which he was defying the lightning. At Ajmer I got rid of him by giving him a "letter of introduction" to the Commissioner, who I assured him would be delighted to right his wrongs, and he is probably now safely lodged in the nearest asylum. I had counted on mad elephants, man-eating tigers and deadly cobras, but lunatic dentists found me unprepared. As I ate my peaceful breakfast, I smiled happily to think of the Commissioner's face when he arrived.

Jaipur is a curious place of broad symmetrical streets, with the houses on either side washed to a bright pink. We spent several pleasant days here, driving leisurely about to see the sights and being entertained at the hotel as State guests. Our status in this respect was not revealed to us till just before the end of my visit, when an official from the palace called to request me to sign my bill which he had been instructed to pay. I suppose that former guests of the State, having been informed prematurely of their privileged position, have sat tight at the hotel drinking champagne, and the State has grown wary. The information was a great relief to Sanka, who had

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been getting quite feverish with anxiety on the point to which he evidently attached great importance; it seems that a considerable amount of reflected glory accrues to him through it. It has, besides, many practical advantages, as you get a comfortable carriage with a good pair of horses to drive about in, and you are shown what there is to be seen without much trouble.

The Maharaja himself is a very stately and conservative person, a direct descendant of the sun and moon, very punctilious about caste and religious observances. It was only under great persuasion that he came over to England for King Edward's Coronation, and he brought with him a shipful of Ganges water to drink and to bathe withal, with a sufficiency of food to last during his stay. He did not, of course, permit me to see him, though I have no doubt that he had a good look at me, but he sent many polite messages through his secretary, and ordered his library and picture gallery to be opened for my inspection, and very curious they were. The library consisted principally of bound volumes of the *Illustrated London News*, while the pictures were the weirdest collection of antiquated rubbish that you can imagine. Some of the armour on the walls was magnificent. The Maharaja does not, however, carry his conservative principles too far, and the Museum in the city was quite up to date, as was also the School of Art, which has been in existence for some

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years and where some excellent work is being done, especially in the art of enamelling on brass.

In striking contrast was the Observatory, built two hundred years ago by the great Jai Singh, with colossal instruments for measuring the movements of the heavenly bodies, all out in the open air and covering several acres of ground.

The secretary was a tall, dignified person, to whom Sanka showed much deference, calling him "Babu" repeatedly, to my surprise, as I had always thought it was a term of reproach; it seems, however, that the educated Bengali delights to be so called. It is very amusing going about India, knowing nothing whatever about it and learning as one goes.

The babu gave us a very good attendant with beautiful manners and excellent English. During our drive out to Amber, he and Sanka had a long argument in some native dialect, and got so excited that I asked what it was all about, and was told that they were comparing the administrative policies of Jaipur and Baroda.

Amber, the ancient capital of the State, now deserted in favour of Jaipur, lies some ten miles away up in the hills: the last two miles of the road are very steep, and are covered on the back of an elephant. It is a lovely place of cool, spacious halls covered with marvellous frescoes, of marble lattices and balconies, from which superb views of the

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mountains are displayed. In the most solemn of its temples the blood of a goat is daily poured forth in sacrifice; otherwise all is silent and still. No doubt it was a very sensible thing to "make the move" (a phrase very dear to the Indian tongue), but it must have needed a very practical mind and energetic hand to make these dreamers do it.

Why on earth the Maharaja does not live here himself for part of the year I cannot think; it would be delightful in the summer, and he could easily get into Jaipur by motor-car. There may be domestic difficulties in the way of which I know nothing. I should have liked to get his views on the matter, but, as I said, he did not give me the opportunity. Before I left he sent me a kind message to say how much he hoped I had enjoyed myself, and a large photograph of himself with his autograph—a fine figure of a man.

I spent a pleasant hour one afternoon in the palace gardens, where they keep a large number of mongoose to keep down the snakes. I wish we had a few of them in Baroda, but I have not yet seen one there. There is a large bank in which the sacred crocodiles live, and we had another sacrifice, a pig this time, so that I might see them crawl up on to the bank to feed. The keeper of the gardens walked about among them quite happily, and wanted me to come down too, but I preferred to stay on the terrace with a good stone parapet between me and the ugly brutes.

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They might have taken a fancy to a bit of fresh, white meat! and I have yet to see Delhi.

Now that I have seen Delhi—or part of it, at least, for the ruins of ancient Delhis go stretching away for miles and miles, right out to the Kutab Minar—I have really very little to say about it. It is too wonderful, and I want to reconstruct it all and cannot. There is far too much of it to see in a week: the Palace of the Moghul Emperors, with its marvellous halls of public and private audience and its Pearl Mosque—you spend hours in it, half in ecstasy, half in a kind of ludicrous panic to think that in a few months all the beautiful details of it will have escaped your memory; the Great Mosque, with its grand staircases and arcades, and the relics of Mohammed; the scenes of the Mutiny, which are harder still to reconstruct; the bazaars with their ever-changing kaleidoscope of living pictures.

The very idea of attempting to describe it all makes one tremble, and one falls back with relief on the small things, notably the exasperating hours at which they give you meals at the hotel, breakfast when you want to be out seeing things, and an unholy meal called *tiffin* when you ought to be asleep. Certainly we manage these things far better in Baroda. Then the food is not good, greasy and tough, and the soda-water is horrible, and everyone drinks whisky to drown the taste of it, which is very

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bad for you. The inconsistency of the authorities is equally exasperating; they have built barracks in the palace gardens, and the place is full of soldiers in their shirt-sleeves carrying buckets, with their braces hanging down, so that you wonder why they wear any at all, and women scolding children and nursing babies; one might as well be in Chelsea. And then in an obscure corner you come across an Italian man and boy, putting precious stones back into the mosaics on the wall from which they were stripped years ago. In this hot sun it is rather bewildering, but luckily it is all in the guide-books, and when I come back we will sort it out together. Pass we then to Agra.

Agra is one of the few places in the world which does not disappoint you. Before you see other places you have imagined too much; with Agra it is impossible to imagine enough. You think that you know the Taj Mahal by heart before you see it, and then when you do see it, you understand that you had not the smallest idea of what it was like. It is sufficiently remote for you to make a little pilgrimage to get to it, a pleasant pilgrimage over broad, shady roads, with pretty English girls passing you on horse-back and making you wonder who they are. And then when you get there you forget all about them and everything else. A great tide of loveliness and holiness, of peace and purity flows gently over your

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whole being, and rocks you softly on its bosom. The marble domes and minarets reflected in the placid water-ways between the avenues of cypress, with the sacred river beyond; you knew that you would find them all there, but when you enter into the Presence, you feel at once that here is something unheard of, undreamt of, unimaginable.

And so I stayed longer in Agra than I had meant to do; partly no doubt because I found in the regiment of cavalry stationed there, old friends who had come out with me on the *Macedonia*, but chiefly, I believe, bound there by the fascination of the Taj. I could not talk to them about it; most of them had been in Agra for six months or more and had seen it once or twice. I was not exactly ashamed of my infatuation, but I did not wish to speak of it. And so whatever else might be going on, tennis, picnics, dinners or dances, I always managed to slip away once at least in a day, now at sunrise, now at sunset, at one time in the full blaze of noon-day heat, at another in the softer splendour of the full moon, and spend an hour or more wandering in the sacred precinct.

There are many other beautiful things in Agra, most of them first cousins of what we had seen at Delhi; but the only other spot in which I loved to linger was the low-roofed chamber in the Fort to which the builder of the Taj, after seven years of rigorous captivity, was carried just before his death

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that he might look once again across the placid waters of the river upon its virgin domes. What death-bed in the world could have inspired more pity and terror than his ?

One other pilgrimage I made, a matter of fifty miles over hot dusty roads, to Fatehpur Sikri, and it was well worth the trouble. Here is another deserted capital, built for a whim by the great Akbar and then, after twenty years of splendour, left to the owls and bats. It seems certain that he came here to enjoy the society of a holy saint who had taken up his abode in the wilderness, but whether he left it because the saint got tired of the frivolities of the Court or because there was no proper water supply is uncertain. Probably the holy man thought there were too many women about the place.

Covered galleries lead from Akbar's apartments to those of his Hindu wife, of his Christian wife and of the Turkish Lady, who must have been a dear little thing if one may judge from the doll's-house of red sandstone, every inch of it covered with exquisite carving, in which she lived. One of the walls of the Christian wife's house is covered with a fresco of the Annunciation. The whole city is built of red sandstone with one dazzling splash of purest white marble in it, the tomb of the Saint in the courtyard of the Great Mosque. The screen of marble fretwork round the tomb is almost covered with offerings tied to it by women who want children.

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The official guide who came round with us was a very tall, handsome man, the fourteenth in direct descent from the Saint; he suggested that I should make an offering, to which I replied, Heaven forbid! that in England a bachelor clergyman might have a family Living, but that it was not considered at all correct for him to have a living family. When Sanka had given a free rendering of this in the vernacular, the ghost of a smile flickered across our guide's face as he said that that would be all right; the offering would be equally good for a wife. I stipulated that she must be a good wife, to which he replied dryly in English, "Oh, yes; good wife and plenty of money." Then came the difficult question what I was to offer. I had only one handkerchief in my pocket and could not well spare my braces; then my eye caught the red silk marker in Murray's handbook and it was soon fluttering gaily on the screen. Our saintly attendant promised the help of his prayers to make the charm work, but I am afraid that he has not yet had time to begin, although it was not forgotten in the exchange of rupees which was made between us before we parted; at any rate it brought me no luck in Agra.

In other ways also my lucky star was under a cloud. A telegram from Gwalior informed me that the Maharaja Scindhia was away from home. I had had so much of the Mutiny at Delhi that Lucknow and Cawnpore began to appear superfluous. After the Taj

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I felt sure that I should not care about the Golden Temple at Amritsar.

In short, I was not feeling at all well, and the long day at Fatehpur Sikri finished me. The doctor said there was not much the matter, but that the hotel food had not suited me and I had been doing too much. I made a feeble stand for Benares, only to be told that it was the last place in the world for me to go in my present condition and that the best thing I could do would be to get back as soon as possible to Baroda. I was all the more inclined to follow his advice as Sanka had a touch of fever, and the item "Medicine for my sake" appeared almost daily in his accounts.

Before parting from the Maharaja, he had told me to wire to him at once if I was in any difficulty, saying that although he hoped I would stay away as long as I liked, and see everything I pleased, he would be glad to see me again whenever I cared to come. So I determined to follow the path of prudence; and very glad I am that I did so, for by the time we reached Baroda, Sanka was in a state of collapse, and is still on the sick list.

A few days' rest and the skilful care of Dr. Jadhav soon put me on my legs again, and I was delighted to find myself once more among my kind and hospitable friends, who gave me the warmest of welcomes, and made me tell them all my experiences during my absence. I was inclined to be distressed at having

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made such a poor attempt to carry out the ample programme which they had planned for me, but Maharaja said cheerfully that India was a large country, and that he meant to show me a good deal more of it yet, and to go with me himself. He then told me that they had arranged to spend the hot weather at Ootacamund in the Nilghiri Hills and hoped that I would go there with him, an invitation which I gladly accepted ; so you will not see me at home yet awhile.

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NO visit to India would be complete without its tiger-shoot, and much though I hoped to see one, I never thought for a moment it would come off. It has, however, and in circumstances which make it almost unique, or, at least, quite worth recording, although you would think it a subject on which it would be difficult to find anything fresh to say.

This particular shoot had been arranged for the Gaekwar, by the Maharaja of Rewah, a Rajput chief of the old school, who had evidently determined to do the thing really well; and Her Highness, who, as I have already told you, is one of the best shots among the Indian ladies, and as keen on sport as any man, English or Indian, was specially invited to take part in it. It had long been her ambition to shoot a tiger, and she was now looking forward with the keenest enjoyment to the opportunity of doing so.

After spending a few days in Bombay, we set out on the long railway journey, His Highness being accompanied by his private secretary, Nimbalker and



Photo by

[R. W. Turnbull, Esq.]

Yours sincerely Chinnabai Gadhwa

HER HIGHNESS THE MAHARANI.

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another officer, who is one of the best shots in the Baroda army, Dr. Jadhav, Turnbull, who had given Shivajirao a holiday for the occasion, and myself. Two chauffeurs in charge of their cars, a couple of clerks, and our personal servants, completed the party, with, of course, the women in attendance on Her Highness.

We arrived on the evening of the second day at a station about fifty miles from Rewah, where we spent the night in bungalows which had been specially prepared, and set off early the next morning in motor-cars to our first halting-place, where breakfast was ready, after which we went on to the first camp, about thirty miles farther on.

The road lay principally through rocky jungle, over high ranges of hills, which were so steep that in some places the cars could not climb them. What do you think they did? They had elephants waiting, which were harnessed with strong ropes to the cars and hauled them over. It was an extraordinary sight, and I wish I had been able to get a snapshot of it. Throughout our visit, cars were sent in daily from the camp to the town to bring in ice and fresh meat, fish and vegetables; and two hundred coolies were kept night and day at the steep places to pull the cars over with long ropes.

We found the Maharaja of Rewah waiting to receive us at the camp, a fine looking man, with his black bushy beard parted in the middle and brushed

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✓ up on either side, making him look very fierce. He is very strict in his observance of Hindu customs and has three wives, whom of course we did not see. One of them is said to be very young indeed, and is called "the Toy." Everything in his State is very primitive and old-fashioned, and there is always a crowd of people with petitions hanging about.

In the camp all had been prepared on the most lavish scale. A few weeks before it had been jungle, with tigers roaming through it; now two bungalows had been built for their Highnesses, surrounded by small gardens, gaily planted with flowers, and magnificent tents, one of which I shared with Turnbull, put up for the rest of the party. Sumptuous dinners were prepared by special cooks, and unlimited champagne of the best brands flowed freely for those who wanted it.

We stayed for three days in the first camp, and then moved on to another equally well appointed, where we remained for a week. The days were all very much alike, and it is hard to remember details; so I will give you a general idea. Except for the great heat, which was alleviated in every possible way, we suffered no hardships at all; it was, in fact, tiger-shooting made easy.

All the morning we stayed in the camp, for even on this expedition for pleasure and sport the Gaekwar had his work to do, and did it with his accustomed thoroughness, rising at daybreak to read

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his correspondence and dictate letters on affairs of state to his secretary, and then reading solidly for two or three hours with me or Turnbull.

At noon we had breakfast and started at about three o'clock for a fifteen mile drive by motor-car into the jungle. We had ten cars altogether, and a hundred miles of new roads had been made for them, so as to avoid the tiring journey on elephants or in carts over the rough country roads. However, within a mile or two of our destination the cars were stopped, for fear of startling the tigers, and we mounted elephants, which took us to the *machans*.

These *machans* are platforms built on to the trees, ten or fifteen feet above the ground and approached by ladders, with just enough room to stand or sit on them. There were usually seven or eight of them; not absolutely safe, of course, as a tiger has been known to spring as high or even higher, but we were each provided with a trusty *shikari*, who would be useful in an emergency. They were placed about fifty yards away from one another, their Highnesses and the Maharaja of Rewah occupying the three central ones. The tigers were driven towards the *machans* by a large army of beaters, and would sometimes come within a few yards of them. If the tiger tried to escape under one of the trees where we were, we had to make a noise so as to send it back, and it would generally get within range of one of the central *machans* and be shot. When the beat began

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a bugle sounded, and a tiger would generally make his appearance every half-hour or so.

Now and then a tiger would be wounded and escape, and then there was great excitement. The beaters, warned by the bugle, would swarm up the nearest trees, while the guns would mount elephants with special howdahs made with protecting walls against the attack of a wounded tiger, and would follow him up until he was found and despatched. This takes some time, perhaps an hour or two, but it is very necessary, as if the tiger escaped altogether he might become a man-eater. Then back to the camp, which we usually reached between seven and eight o'clock, and dinner, which was sometimes followed by a rubber but more often by bed, as we were all tired.

The most exciting adventure we had came at the end of a rather slack day. We were beginning to think about going home if the last beat proved blank when suddenly three tigers were seen making straight for the Gaekwar's *machan*. His Highness killed the first by a well-directed shot in the neck, and wounded the second, which turned and took refuge in a rocky *nullah* some two hundred yards away. The third tiger was mortally wounded by the Maharaja of Rewah and managed to crawl into the same *nullah*. The beaters were at once informed by signal that two of the tigers were wounded, and some more adventurous than the rest approached the edge of the *nullah*. They were seen by one of the tigers, who was luckily too much

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injured to spring, but he roared in such a terrifying fashion that it was a case of *sauf qui peut*, and they all turned and swarmed up the nearest trees. As soon as we had ascertained that there were no other tigers about, some of us mounted elephants and with great difficulty persuaded them to descend into the *nullah*. The place was so full of rocks and bushes that the search was most exciting, and it was a good half-hour before we found one tiger lying half concealed beneath a huge boulder and gave him his quietus. The other we were unable to find: he had probably been wounded very slightly and had managed somehow to slip away.

One night considerable excitement was caused by a fire in the native quarters, which we all went to see. For a long time it blazed very fiercely, spreading rapidly from one hut to another, but at last they managed to get it under without any great damage.

The arrangements for locating the tigers were very complete. Telephone wires had been laid through the jungle in all directions, and *shikaris* placed in every part of it: then when one of them discovered a tiger he sent a message immediately to headquarters and steps were taken accordingly. I believe that this is the first time that the telephone has been used for this purpose.*

No game was shot but tigers, except on one

* I have since heard that when the Viceroy went to shoot with the Maharaja Scindhia of Gwalior the heliograph was used in a similar way.

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occasion when Her Highness shot a bison. Altogether seven tigers fell to the Maharaja, five to the Maharani and three to the Maharaja of Rewah.

On the way back to Rewah a stop was made at the famous game preserve, a tract of land several square miles in extent enclosed by a high wall, over which not even a tiger could escape. There are three entrances with large gates, over which rooms have been built for sportsmen.

For a week, food in large quantities had been placed in this preserve, and then the gates were closed the day before our arrival. As soon as their Highnesses had taken their places in the rooms, the beat began from the end of the preserve farthest away from the gates. Presently the devoted victims began to appear, at first in twos and threes, and then in large herds. There were hundreds of sambur, but when several dozen had fallen the shooting ceased at the Maharani's request, as she said it was becoming mere butchery. Just then a tigress came along with her cubs: the Maharani had laid aside her rifle, but she caught it up again, and shot one of the cubs. Instantly the tigress turned and went down the line of beaters striking at them as she went. Five of them were badly mauled, and of these three died of their wounds afterwards. Her Highness was much concerned at this sad termination of the expedition, which she had so much enjoyed: she requested that she might be kept informed of the



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condition of the sufferers, and sent suitable compensation to their families.

Soon after our return to Baroda we came in for the Muharram festival, which is of Mohammedan origin, but is now observed as a general holiday. Strictly, it is a Moslem miracle-play, something like the Passion Play at Ober-Ammergau, representing the martyrdom and death of Hassan and Hossein, sons of Ali and Fatima, the son-in-law and daughter of Mohammed. Moslems of the Shi'ah persuasion assemble in the house of mourning, and a procession is formed in which Tabuts, or biers, are carried, before they are thrown into the river or the sea. The mourners move in a circle, beating their breasts and crying, "Hassan! Hossein!" Such, according to Murray, is the orthodox ceremony, in which no Sunnis are allowed to take part.

So far as I can make out, we did not see the real Shi'ah ceremony, but a caricature of it conducted by the Sunnis, who do not look upon Hossein as a martyr, but turn the occasion into ridicule, in which they are joined by a mob of Hindus and other sects.

It seems to be, in fact, something like our Guy Fawkes celebrations in England on the fifth of November, when we all turn out to throw the poor old Pope on to the bonfire, not because we are fanatical Protestants, but just for the fun of the thing.

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However that may be, though no one seemed to know exactly what it was all about, they were all agreed that we should have an amusing evening. And so we did. Pilajirao came to dinner, and afterwards he and Shivajirao and I had an elephant and went down into the city. The streets were swarming with people, acrobats, jugglers and dancers were performing at every corner, and fireworks were being let off all over the place. We should have been nowhere without our elephant: no horse, however well trained, would have stood it for a moment; but an elephant takes it all very calmly and can make his way through the densest throng. If they are too mad or too drunk to get out of his way, he quietly takes them up in his trunk and throws them into the gutter, and later in the evening an ambulance takes them to the hospital.

Goodness only knows what we saw; for two hours it was pandemonium let loose. And then came the wonderful contrast, which never fails to delight me, the stillness of the palace gardens with the palms rustling in the breeze, and the graceful tower soaring to the stars blazing in the deep blue sky; the ring of the sentry's lance on marble steps as the old elephant shuffles by to put us down among the carved traceries of the porch; the spacious dignity of hall and staircase, where solemn figures in scarlet and gold bow to the ground as we pass to our quiet rooms, from which the roar of the distant city can be heard as a whisper-

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ing murmur. It is like turning into the quadrangle of an Oxford college after a Town and Gown riot in the High, with an added touch of royalty which is very pleasing to my plebeian mind. Be it never so splendid, there's no place like Raj Mahal.

The next day we all went down to see the procession from the balconies of the Old Palace, which were crowded with all the English people from the camp as well as with the native officials. Old Mohammed Ali was there with a great curved sword dangling between his curved legs and tripping him up as he panted up the steep staircase. We were very pleased to see one another again, and it was good to hear his great gurgling laugh while I tried to find out whether he was a Shi'ah or a Sunni, so that I might be the same. Religious feeling is said sometimes to run very high at this festival, but there was no trace of it to-day; everyone seemed to be out to enjoy himself.

I wanted to look at Mohammed's sword, but he would only let me draw it a little way; if it is drawn right out of the sheath, it is not returned till it has drawn blood. Presently the procession started, headed by the Gaekwar on his elephant; then came Sampatrao, very excited and voluble, waving his hand gaily to the ladies on the balcony; then Kaka, in a resplendent Kashmir shawl, looking very fierce and gnawing his beard; then Mohammed Ali, being bundled up into his howdah like a clown in a circus, with his eye on

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the gallery; then a host of smaller notables with their eye on the photographer's camera. They were followed by an interminable medley of fire-eaters, sword swallows, dancing girls, mendicant fakirs loaded with chains, rope-walkers and actors; and so the procession rolled leisurely by for hours, each bit of it blocking the way of the others while it gave its performance before our balcony.

As far as the eye could reach, the gay Tabuts came swaying down the road, fanciful copies of the tombs of Hassan and Hossein, made of glittering gimcrack and tinsel and carried on the shoulders of men and boys shouting wildly and dancing in the most fantastic way. Horses smeared with blood followed, carrying little boys, Hossein's children; then a litter with Hossein's sister and widow, very popular; then Hossein himself, tall and dignified, with a big, green and gold turban. And all round a mighty throng of merry-makers, wild with excitement, painted, feathered and dressed in fantastic garments, sweeping along arm-in-arm, dancing and leaping, and never for a moment ceasing to shout with all the power of their lungs, "Hassan! Hossein! Hassan! Hossein!" I wonder if I shall ever get the sound of those shrill, cracked voices out of my ears.

When they had all gone by, Shivajirao drove me in the car down to the bridge to see them arrive at the river. The great flights of steps on either side of the bathing place were thronged with tens of thousands

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of wild, eager faces and the water was full of bobbing black heads, above which towered the Tabuts as they went slowly swirling down the stream to make a curious procession of their own between miles of solitary banks; an object of curiosity to troops of chattering monkeys and doubtless of adoration to many a trembling peasant, who would stop for a moment from his ceaseless toiling over never-ending plains to prostrate himself before the passage of the unknown god.

We have just had a visit from His Highness the Jam Sahib of Jamnagar, better known to Englishmen by his old name of Ranjitsinhji. He arrived on Sunday evening and left on Tuesday night, three days—rest day, guest day and departure day—being the traditional limit of Oriental hospitality, except in the case of relatives. He was received by the Gaekwar in the great hall and waved his hands, filled with gold and silver coins, round his host's head three times to invoke a blessing of wealth and prosperity; he then let the coins fall upon the ground and they were presently collected by the servants as *baksheesh*.

The Jam Sahib owes some kind of fealty to the rulers of Baroda and had come to arrange a question of territory. He brought with him nine or ten charming men, who had been spending last summer with him at Shillinglea in Sussex, and we were soon all good friends.

The rooms next to mine had been allotted to His

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Highness, and before dinner I called upon him and reminded him that we had met before at Cambridge and Hastings, when I was travelling about England with Fatehsinhrao. He remembered me quite well, and was exceedingly kind and amiable. His manners are beautiful, very quiet and dignified; a singularly happy combination of the lofty bearing of the Eastern chieftain and the polished ease of the English gentleman. You would hardly call him a handsome man, but there is a thoughtful repose upon his intelligent face which is most attractive. The eyes are rather melancholy except when his features are animated, as they often are, for he is an exceedingly good talker and has a pleasant, well-modulated voice; his limbs are lithe and supple and all his movements are extremely graceful. His demeanour towards the Gaekwar was perfect, and indeed his courtesy and consideration to us all were remarkable. He plays a very good game of billiards, holding his cue with lightness and ease and compiling respectable breaks without the smallest effort or desire to display his skill. Altogether he made a very favourable impression.

During his visit we were a bachelor party, and the ladies did not appear at dinner. The Jam Sahib paid several visits to the Maharani and the Princess in their apartments, but they were quite private, and I was not invited. They told me afterwards how much they liked him. All the party were great on games,

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and we spent a good deal of time on the cricket ground and in the billiard-room. There were about twenty of us each night at dinner, and the conversation was very bright and amusing.

One evening the Court astrologer came to dine, and amused us afterwards by telling our fortunes. He looked rather grave over my hand and said that I should have four more happy years; remembering my rash votive offering at Fatehpur Sikri, I told him that probably there was a marriage waiting for me at the end of that time; but he said, No; I had had three chances and should not have any more. I promised him to do my best to falsify his prediction, and he said that he should be only too delighted if I did, and that he would make a note of it as a curious exception to the rule. In future I shall give astrology a wide berth. He made us all laugh very much over Kaka's hand, saying that the lines of head and heart ran into one another to an alarming extent and that he could hardly be held responsible for any mental or moral aberrations. Shivajirao was delighted at this and informed us that the prophecy was already on the high road to fulfilment, as he had noticed Kaka at dinner vainly trying to persuade the butler to fill his glass with champagne, and then trying to pour water into a tumbler which he had just turned upside down.

The Jam Sahib drank no wine and smoked very little. He was greatly interested in Fatehsinhrao's

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children, two dear little girls called Indomatti and Lakshmi Devi. They are four or five years old and are great pets of their grandfather, the Gaekwar, who usually has them to breakfast once a week. They come with their English governess and sit at the table in high chairs, with bibs worked with pictures of nursery rhymes tied round their necks. Long before the meal is over they have had enough of it, and run about the room playing hide-and-seek through the windows that open on to the balcony until we go to the billiard-room, where they are perfectly happy, crawling about on the table to the great discomfort of the cloth or playing with the pyramid balls on the floor. They go for a ride every day on two dear little Shetland ponies, which are kept for them in the stables. The little boy, who will some day succeed to the throne, is quite a baby. His mother is devoted to him and seldom lets him out of her sight; he has an English nurse and Fatehsinhrao's old servant is his adoring slave.

It is a touching sight to see the old man carrying him tenderly in his arms, thinking, no doubt, of the happy days when his old master, a light-hearted impulsive boy, played many a merry trick upon him. What a handsome, intelligent, delightful fellow he was, such a good sportsman, and with such splendid health and strength. His untimely death will ever be mourned by the many friends who knew and loved him.

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We were all sorry when the Jam Sahib went away. Shivajirao and I went down with him to the station, where a guard of honour was drawn up and the band was playing. Chairs had been placed on the platform, and we sat and chatted for some time, and then with many kind farewells and hopes that before long we should come to see him in Jamnagar, he went to sleep in his saloon which was to leave by the midnight train, while we went for a drive in the divine moonlight round the race-course before turning in.

On the way home we passed the band returning from the station; they were making a valiant effort to play a two-step from memory, with the most ludicrous effect, making us shout with laughter; for some time after I had gone to bed, bits of that weird tune kept coming back to my mind and a fresh fit of merriment banished sleep.

Since our return from Rewah, the Maharani has been very busy getting up a charity concert in aid of the Home for Widows and Orphans, which she has founded. Every morning we have spent an hour together on her balcony, arranging the programme and all the details of the performance, while she made me a cup of delicious coffee as she alone knows how to make it.

All the English people from the Camp who had any musical skill had promised to take part in it, Sampatrao had undertaken to arrange some native *tableaux*, and it was to be held in the theatre and

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be a big success. All went well at first, and then on the very day before the performance an unexpected contretemps arose which threatened to bring all our plans to grief. The Maharani, in her zeal for a big house, had arranged to throw the gallery open to the general public at a rupee for admission. Going down in the afternoon to the Gymkhana, I found all my artistes in revolt, nothing would induce them to sing before such an audience; it would be as bad as appearing at a music-hall.

After giving them most solemn assurance that nothing of the kind had been contemplated, I rushed back to the palace post-haste, to persuade the Maharani to alter her arrangements, not an easy task, as she had set her heart on them, and her Highness can be very firm when she pleases. It took all my diplomacy to effect a compromise and all my energy to make the secretary issue a new lot of invitations and tickets and to transform the gallery into an upper circle. We were hard at work at it all the next day, as the performers insisted on rehearsing on the stage, and having the workmen cleared out of the theatre while they did so. Moreover, they turned up very late for the show, and the band, which had only brought one overture with them, had to play it through three times. However, in the end it went off very well, the great hit of the evening being some Plantation songs, which the Evans-Gordon family sang to the accompaniment of

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the General's guitar. And when I went on to the stage at the end to announce receipts amounting to five hundred pounds, I felt that, though it had taken years off my life, it was well worth it. A marquee had been erected outside the theatre, in which the performers had an excellent supper, sent down by the Gaekwar, and they drove back to the Camp quite pleased with themselves.

His Highness has suddenly conceived a passion for hearing discourses on religion, and a most saintly person of venerable aspect has appeared in a long yellow robe, accompanied by fifteen disciples, also in yellow robes, but not so venerable. By day they have driven about Baroda in a kind of hay waggon, drawn by camels; by night the saintly person, seated on a large bolster, has held forth in the Durbar hall at great length with much gesticulation to the Maharaja, seated opposite on another bolster and listening with earnest attention.

Twice the lecture has been given out of doors by torchlight, the sage repeating a very long epic poem and the disciples marching round between the different books, chanting a kind of Greek chorus. It went on for hours and when I went to bed they were still hard at it. I have only the vaguest idea what it was all about, but Kaka told me that the part which pleased him most was the story of a man whose wife changed herself by night into a bitch and drank up all the oil in the lamp.

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Although it seemed rather unfair to expect me to enter into competition with such picturesque theology, I delivered my own lecture on Religion to an audience of about fifty people, who assembled reluctantly in the small Durbar hall at five o'clock one hot afternoon. The acoustic properties of the room were not good, and when the Maharaja complimented me afterwards on my efforts, he said that he should no doubt have enjoyed it still more if he had been able to hear what I said.

A few days later, there was a lecture on some secular subject in the large Durbar hall, but by this time Maharaja had had enough of being instructed, and, as he was not feeling very well, he asked them to excuse him from being present. After dinner he suggested that it would be rather fun to go to the gallery and see how they were getting on. We all went on tip-toe, and when he got near, Maharaja went down on his hands and knees and crawled along till he found a good place from which he could peep at them, like some mischievous schoolboy. He almost gave himself away when some pompous person got up to propose a vote of condolence on His Highness' indisposition, and the whole thing was so funny that we were all rolling about with laughter and cramming our handkerchiefs into our mouths.

During Lent it seemed rather a good opportunity to try to carry out the Church's rule of fasting. I

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had hoped to do this without exciting observation, and perhaps I might have done so, so far as the Gaekwar was concerned ; but I had reckoned without my hostess. On the second day, the Maharani, whom nothing escapes, saw that I was eating no meat and made me tell her the reason. After that, such delicious special dishes were sent up for me by the chef that I am afraid I have not acquired much merit by my abstinence. It was characteristic of the kindness and thoughtfulness for others which make all her actions so gracious.

On Easter day we had delightful services in the church with a good many communicants in the morning ; and I felt that I was indeed highly favoured to be allowed to bear witness to the Faith of Christ in this land, where there are so many millions to whom the Gospel of the Resurrection has never yet been preached.

The weather has now become very hot, and we dine every night on a terrace on the very top of the palace, right under the stars. A lift has been made in the angle of the wall, to bring the food up hot from the kitchen, and the table is very prettily lit up. Lately, we have been having mangoes, of which I had heard so much. They had always said that until you ate a mango, you did not know what fruit meant. They were certainly quite good just at first, very juicy and cool, but after a time you get rather tired of the flavour, which is too aromatic, especially

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when the fruit is a little over-ripe. It cannot rival the flavour of a nectarine or of a peach.

It was on this terrace, after dinner, that I said good-bye to the Maharani and Indira who were to make the journey to Ootacamund by train, while the Gaekwar and I were going to see if we could get there by motor-car. They were both looking so lovely in the soft moonlight, their eyes no less bright and lustrous than the jewels which flashed beneath the shaded electric globes, that it was, indeed, hard to tear oneself away. "Come quickly to Ooty," was Indira's parting injunction, and I felt that among all the wonderful and beautiful sights we might see on the way, I should be impatient to obey it.



Photo by]

[Lottie Charles, 3yt, Curzon Street, London.

Ludina Kájá Szikszó

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THE next morning we were in Bombay, where we spent a busy day in the shops, and at four o'clock we started for the drive to Khandala, to which place the servants had already gone ahead with the baggage. It took us some time to get free from the crowded streets and tramways of Bombay, and when at last we reached the open country there were many bullock-carts on the road.

There is a singular sameness about the methods of a bullock-cart on being passed by an automobile. All the occupants tumble out backwards on to the road, and the bullocks then plunge with the cart down the nearest embankment, selecting, when they can, some place from which it seems impossible that they should ever be extricated. The buffalo waits until he sees which side you are going to take, and then calmly takes the same. Sheep, pigs and goats race on in front until their breath and your patience are exhausted. Dogs boldly charge straight at the car and emerge by some miracle behind, choking out a dusty bark to prove that you have not frightened them a bit.

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During all our wanderings we had only one fatal accident; poor fellow! how gallantly he dashed forward to meet his doom!

Leaving the hills of Matheran on the left, we sped along fairly good roads and made good running until we reached the sixtieth milestone, where we had a puncture. Leaving the others to fit on a new tyre, the Maharaja and I walked on for nearly an hour. The sun was setting, and the rampart of hills in front of us was bathed in a flood of purple light. At last the car overtook us. Just as we were getting in, two boys passed, and His Highness, who loves to talk to the country-folk, asked them several questions, laughing heartily at their answers and making them laugh, and leaving them happy with a handful of fruit from our tea-basket.

Soon we reached the quaint old-world village that lies at the foot of the hills, and then a sharp turn brought us on to the beautifully engineered road, whose steep gradients our car took with the greatest ease. The last glories of the twilight, which in India is ever too short, faded, and darkness was upon us; so we had to make as quickly as we could for our hotel, which we reached safely.

The Gaekwar had left Baroda rather suddenly, and as he wished to see several of his ministers to settle details of administration during his absence, and Khandala was easily accessible from Bombay, we stayed there for a week. Our rooms were simply and plainly

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furnished, but were clean and comfortable ; the obliging manager was anxious to please us in every way, and as we had brought our own cooks we had a sufficient variety of food. The views on all sides were magnificent, and we had splendid walks every morning, going out for a good spin in the car in the afternoon.

One day we went to see the celebrated Karli caves. A steep climb up the hill brought us to the old Buddhist monastery and temple hewn out of the solid rock of the hillside. The temple, which was built about 160 B.C., consists of a nave and two aisles, ending in an apse, in which is a huge block of stone surmounted by a wooden umbrella, under which the records were kept. There are thirty-six pillars carved at the top with men and women riding elephants. The roof has wooden beams projecting from it to prevent any echo, and reminded the Gaekwar of a wooden church which we had seen together in Norway. There is a fine doorway to the temple with large sculptured figures, but one of the big pillars has been removed to make room for a small Hindu temple, which Her Highness came to visit some years ago, when she gave a big feast to four thousand people. The monastery consists of several large rooms hewn out of the rock, with small cells round them; the marks of the chisel are as fresh to-day as they were two thousand years ago. The place was filled with the soft cooing of innumerable doves. Just as we were leaving, a party of native trippers arrived with a

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baby and a dog, and having stared about them in a bewildered way, began to make preparations for a picnic.

We had only brought one car with us, and the Gaekwar thought we ought to have another, as our servants could not meet us at every stopping-place, and it was necessary to carry more luggage than we had originally intended. So one morning we ran down to Bombay by the train, passing through the grand ravines of the beautiful Ghat and descending two thousand feet in the first sixteen miles, and had a look at a 50 h.p. Mercedes, seating six people, which would hold everything we wanted to take with us. In the afternoon we took a trial trip in her back to Khandala, and she behaved so well that the Maharaja bought her at once. He has not regretted his purchase, and she will do capitally for running about in the districts when we return to Baroda.

A few days later we set out again, the Maharaja in his own car, a 40 h.p. Fiat, with his A.D.C. and the doctor; myself in the new Mercedes next to the Italian chauffeur, who drives like Jehu and does not speak a word of English, so that when the pace got too hot I had to exhort him in musical terms, as: "Piano, piano!" "Allegro ma non troppo!" Behind us were Neale, the valet, and a native servant reclining luxuriously on the luggage.

The forty miles of road to Poona were soon covered, and having had tea in a handsome restaurant,



PRINCE SHIVAJIRAO GAEKWAR.



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we went to a toy-shop for presents for Indomatti and Lakshmi Devi. At five o'clock we were again on the road to Satara, climbing the winding ascent which leads to the long tunnel under the hill, and then plunging down on the other side with a glorious prospect before us of rolling hills and distant mountains. Passing through the beautiful town of Wai and across the river, we soon began the long, steep climb along the face of the mountain to Panchgani.

Here we were in a new world, the rich red soil and abundant foliage affording a pleasing contrast to the arid country which we had left behind us. The sun was setting in a blaze of glory, and above our heads was the silver streak of the new moon. Sending the cars ahead, the Maharaja walked with me the last three miles into Mahableshwar, enjoying the beauty of the scene, and we were tempted to prolong our ramble so far that the shades of night had long fallen before we reached the hotel, where our anxious friends were just setting out with lanterns in search of us.

We stayed for ten days at Mahableshwar, and a delightful place it is. The Bishop of Bombay and Robert Brinton had arrived there a few days before we did, and I rode with them every morning, and in the afternoon we made an excursion to some charming spot, with exquisite views of the surrounding country lying far beneath our feet. The Gaekwar had also a

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number of friends here, and gave several dinner-parties at the club, where the cuisine was excellent.

One morning when leaving the hotel I saw a large cobra cross the road in front of me and slip into a hole in the mud wall of a cottage. Calling one of the servants, I told him what I had seen and soon they were busy hacking the wall to pieces with pick-axes. While doing this, they discovered a large quantity of honeycomb in the wall, after which Master Cobra had no doubt gone. The pickaxes were thrown aside, and a dozen black arms thrust into the hole up to the elbow to fetch out the honey, the cobra being quite forgotten. Luckily, no one was bitten, but it is no wonder that one hears of large numbers of natives dying every year of snake-bite when they are so careless of danger.

On the last day of our stay we made an expedition to Pratabgarh, a hill-fort perched on a precipitous rock, which was the stronghold of the Gaekwar's great ancestor, Shivaji, and the scene of one of the most remarkable events in Indian history, the founding of the Mahratta empire. Shivaji being besieged here by the Bijapur forces under Afzal Khan, offered to make his submission on condition that the two commanders should meet unarmed between the two armies. Under his white muslin robes, Shivaji wore a coat of mail, and a cruel weapon of sharp steel hooks, called a *Waghnakh*, "the tiger's claws," was attached by rings to one of his hands. In the very act of embracing

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the Khan, Shivaji drove these claws into him, tore out his vitals, and dispatched him with a dagger, while the Mahratta army rushed out upon the Bijapur forces and cut them in pieces.

The next morning we made an early start for Kolhapur. For the first fifteen miles we had to retrace our steps down the mountain, and then the road branched off to Satara, where we stayed just long enough to see the famous *Waghnaikh* and the quilted coat worn by Shivaji. It is lined with chain-armour, hidden by thick folds of silk, and embroidered with gold. The dagger, which is very handsome and has some fine diamonds, rubies and emeralds in the handle, is eighteen inches long.

Ten miles from Kolhapur we were met by the Maharaja, who had come out in his car to welcome the Gaekwar, and they drove together into the capital. The palace, which lies just outside the city, recalled in many ways the Lakshmivilas Palace at Baroda, both of them having been designed by the same architect, though it is much smaller. A handsome suite of apartments had been allotted to the Gaekwar on the first floor, opening on to the corridor round the fine Durbar hall, which is decorated with equal taste and splendour.

The palace is delightfully cool and airy, and is furnished in modern style and brilliantly lit by electricity. At breakfast we were joined by the Maharaja's brother, and by his sons, two fine boys of

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twelve and fourteen, who already possess something of the stately bearing of their father, while their sister is celebrated for her good horsemanship.

The Maharaja of Kolhapur, who also traces his descent from Shivaji, is a man of magnificent physique. The long white robe with flowing sleeves which he wears, gives him a somewhat priestly look, but his face is quite boyish and very good-natured. He is an enthusiastic lover of horses and dogs, and is followed everywhere by two or three devoted fox-terriers.

Not the least enjoyable event of our stay was the visit we paid to the stud farm and to the kennels, where we saw His Highness's own pack of hounds, and at night we were awakened by the barking of a multitude of the canine tribe, who have been trained to "bay the moon with midnight howl."

In the afternoon, His Highness took us for a drive in the city. Passing under a *Nakkar Khana*, or music gallery, we found ourselves in the square of the Old Palace, in which several elephants were stabled, a conspicuous object being an elephant-car, a curious survival from old times, about the size of an omnibus.

The temple of Amba Bai, the tutelary deity of Kolhapur, occupies a considerable portion of the precincts of the palace. It has a great bell with the inscription: "Ave Maria Gratia Plena Dominus Tecum," which must have been obtained from the

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Portuguese: it has rung the "Angelus" here daily for the last two hundred years. We also saw the Durbar hall and armoury, and the Maharaja was not content till he had conducted the Gaekwar up a narrow staircase of black marble to the top of the Gate Tower, from which we had a lovely view of the city and the surrounding country.

Leaving the palace, we went to the fine temple of Lakshmi. Its courts were thronged by an enormous crowd, and echoed the thunders of the great drums which were beaten during our visit. At the Albert Edward Hospital we were received by the house surgeon. It is furnished with every modern appliance, and the operating room with its spotless white tiles has a most business-like appearance. Indeed, our friend the doctor was so fascinated by it that he returned there the next day to undergo a dental operation.

We dined on the terrace in the moonlight, the Maharaja insisting that the Gaekwar, as being the chief of the Mahratta Princes, should sit at the head of the table. He himself sat next to him, and ate a large number of chocolates between every course from a great dish in front of him. He has a very sweet tooth and helped himself so liberally to an almond pudding that, when he pressed me to have some, I could not resist saying "Which is the pudding?" with a sly glance at his plate, which made him laugh. He had been vainly trying to

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“place” me all day, but after that we got on very well together. He drank an enormous quantity of water.

In the morning we were up betimes and drove to the College, where we were received by the Principal, an Oxford M.A. in Holy Orders, who took us over the building and invited the Gaekwar to examine some of the students. This His Highness did with pleasure, and was delighted to find what good progress they were making.

From the College we went on to the High School, which we found in an equally satisfactory condition. Leaving these pleasant labours, we drove through the country to the Hill Fort of Panhala along an excellent road, the last five miles of which are rather steep.

After being hospitably received at the Residency by Major Wodehouse and his family, we explored the ramparts and gateways of this ancient fortress, which has stood so many sieges and seen such vicissitudes of fortune. Now it is a most peaceful spot, and just inside the triple gate through which the British effected an entrance sixty years since there blooms an exquisite garden, in which the cardamom and other tropical plants flourish and furnish a grateful shade. The sun was now getting so hot that we were obliged to make our way to the Summer Palace, where breakfast was ready. As soon as the heat had somewhat abated we descended again to

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the city and made our way to the headquarters of the Maratha Students' Association, gaily decorated for our reception.

After some speeches and recitations from the students, an address was read and presented to the Gaekwar in a silver casket, in which special reference was made to his efforts to prevent the evils of early marriages. His Highness replied at some length, dealing chiefly with the subject of education in India, especially among the depressed classes, and concluded with the words: "The tide of progress in this country is slow, though I believe it to be sure: we must be content to sow the seed, and leave it to the generations yet to come to reap the harvest."

After inspecting the building we drove to the Girls' School, where the Gaekwar was persuaded to speak again, which he did in the vernacular, for the benefit of the common people who were crowding the verandah. This duty performed, we drove to the Brahmapuri Hill, where the bodies of the Brahmins are burned, and received the customary offerings from the priests.

Our dinner on the terrace that evening was as rudely interrupted as was the banquet in "The Tempest." Just as we were finishing our soup, a violent thunderstorm burst over our heads, and the Maharaja, whose philosophic calm nothing can disturb, led the way indoors. A host of servants swiftly dismantled the flooded table. Luckily, the storm soon

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passed away, and so quickly did the thirsty ground absorb the rain that we were able to walk after dinner without discomfort to a large meadow adjoining the palace, where His Highness had commanded a circus performance in the open air.

I have never seen a more picturesque spectacle. In front of the awning under which we sat was the arena, lit by powerful lamps, and beyond, on the banks of a natural amphitheatre, the white garments of ten thousand spectators glistened in the moonlight, with here and there the ruddy glare of a torch. In the front rank of the audience, but in no way distinct from them, sat the young Princes, who, in company with a dozen small cousins, led the laughter and applause; and at the conclusion of the performance I was much struck to see the paternal way in which the Maharaja moved about among his people, with a want of ceremony on his part and with a quiet unobtrusive respect on theirs which spoke volumes for the good relations which exist between ruler and subjects in the State of Kolhapur.

The next day was comparatively quiet and restful; we drove thirty miles into the hills to see some irrigation works which are in progress, and to picnic on a wooded knoll. The well-cultivated country through which we passed, and the happy faces of the peasantry as they pressed forward in every village with offerings of fruit and flowers, were an eloquent testimony to the prosperity of the State.

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On the following morning we bade farewell to our kind host, the Maharaja, who had done so much to make us comfortable and happy during our stay in his delightful palace, and set off for Belgaum, stopping about ten miles from the city to rest at the house of His Highness's brother, who accompanied the Gaekwar to the boundary of the Kolhapur territory. Soon after ten o'clock we arrived at Belgaum and breakfasted at a bungalow which had been reserved for us in the cantonment.

In the afternoon we had a delightful drive through beautiful scenery and along a first-rate road to Amboli, where we stayed at the travellers' bungalow, from which we had a lovely view "over the hills and far away" to the sea. The Chief of the Savantwadi received us very kindly, and asked us to dine with him to meet his son-in-law and the Political Agent and Mrs. Barrett. As it was the first time that he had ever sat down to break bread with Europeans, we much appreciated the compliment, and spent a very pleasant evening.

It was most amusing to watch his efforts to manage his knife and fork; we kept our countenances nobly, but the poor man got very little to eat. He came with us the next day for a run through the lovely hill-country down to the coast at Vingorlah, and the day after that we returned to Belgaum.

The following morning was dull and threatened rain, but it cleared up to a beautiful afternoon, and

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driving throughout the day was cool and pleasant. Soon after leaving Belgaum one of the cars was delayed for an hour by a short circuit; so we walked on, and presently came across a funny old fellow from Kathiawar, with whom the Maharaja had an amusing talk. We tried to persuade him that we came from Bombay, but he was not to be deceived.

At noon we reached Hubli, and, after breakfasting at the station, went to the Town Hall, where they had prepared a little reception for us; and at four o'clock left for Harihar, eighty miles away. But alas! our good fortune now temporarily deserted us. At some cross-roads we took the wrong turning, and went sailing on without discovering our mistake; gradually the roads got worse and worse, fords had to be crossed, and all signs of civilization began to disappear.

At last the sun declining in its setting on our left, warned us that instead of going south we were travelling due north. Hastily we began to retrace our steps, but by the time we had found our bearings darkness had come on, and we were still thirty miles from our destination. To add to our woes, the lamps on the second car refused to work; so that we had only one light apiece. We therefore toiled on at half speed, and were not sorry when at nearly ten o'clock, we sighted the lights of Harihar. The Mysore Government had prepared a splendid camp for us, and an excellent dinner soon put us in the mood to laugh heartily over our late misfortunes.

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At eight o'clock the next morning we were again upon our way. The roads were not so good as those over which we had been travelling on British territory; but the Mysore Government had made the most excellent arrangements for our comfort and safety. No fear now of losing our way; every few miles a floral wreath was hanging across the road, at every turn a watchman stood with guiding arm outstretched, in every village policemen kept a clear path through the orderly crowd, a "caution" board crowned the top of every dangerous hill; and the bullock-cart, that *bête noire* of the motorist in India, made the heart grow fonder by its absence.

The scenery now became more grand, and on either side great blocks of rock lay in tremendous heaps, as if hurled there by giant hands. Just before Hariyur is reached, a lonely road leads to a wonderful reservoir at Mari Kanave, ten miles away in the mountains. This we were anxious to see, and though it took us so far out of our way it was well worth the trouble. The obliging engineer who met us said it took ten years to complete, and that the tank is one of the largest in the world. The lofty dam springs up sheer from the river bed, now green with rushes, and on either side, high above the valley, stands an elegant pavilion of grey granite. In one of these, fanned by the cool breeze from the lake, we ate our frugal lunch.

The run to Tumkur, where tea was ready for us,

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was too hot to be pleasant, though we passed through beautiful tropical scenery; but the fifty-mile drive from Tumkur to Bangalore, through fair avenues of trees, with fine mountains in the distance, all glowing in the sunset, was the most beautiful part of our whole tour. At seven o'clock we entered the park, and drew up before the imposing palace of the Maharaja, which, in his absence, he had most kindly put at our disposal.

The next morning we were able to see its beauties at greater leisure. They will, no doubt, greatly improve with age, when weather and creeping plants have softened the somewhat hard contour. The finest feature of the place is the magnificent room over the Durbar hall, approached by a handsome staircase and decorated and furnished with great taste. In this room, I found after dinner, to my joy, two splendid pianos.

After a quiet day spent in driving round the sights of Bangalore, which is a beautiful town, we rose at daybreak to enter upon the last stage of our journey. The cars were running splendidly, and we flew through country which became lovelier at every mile, until we reached Seringapatam, where we stayed for nearly two hours, tracing the limits of the Fort and admiring the graceful outlines of the Darya Daulat Palace and of Tippoo Sultan's tomb. At Mysore we stopped for a few minutes to see the wonderful new palace that is being built, in which

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there are some ancient silver and ivory doors of great beauty, and then pushed on to Nanjangud, where breakfast was ready. And what a breakfast it was! all the fruits and dainties of the land, tray after tray, till the floor was almost covered with them, besides flowers and scents and unguents without measure; and it was all offered with such smiling grace by the Mysore servants, who were delighted at receiving a visit from the Gaekwar, that we were all charmed.

Hearing that the temple of Jagannath, where there is a great car festival every year, was close at hand, we tore ourselves away from the delightful bungalow on the river bank, a paradise for fishermen, and went to see it. It is an imposing pile of great length, with a high tower, and the carving is very varied and quaint. There were six or seven cars, of black wood covered with carving, and with huge heavy wheels, gradually increasing in size. Their whole aspect was most funereal, and to see them standing side by side with our own cars, so neat and bright and swift, was one of the most curious contrasts of the ancient with the modern that I have seen. Luckily, the analogy was not sufficiently obvious to awaken sacrificial instincts in any of the inhabitants.

We had now to go at our best speed to make up for lost time, and soon the Nilgiris were in sight; but many a hill had to be climbed and many a wooded glade crossed before we reached the foot of the actual mountain. We had been told in Bangalore

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that it would be impossible to get our long cars round the sharp turns of the steep ascent, and carriages and riding horses had been ordered to meet us, but our drivers were confident of victory, and after one or two difficulties on the lower slopes they took our party up in great triumph. Towards evening we were in the Maharaja's mountain home, a delightful country house standing among the woods on rising ground at the end of the lake.

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AMONG the fair and delightful places of the earth, Ootacamund, or Ooty to use its more familiar pet-name, must be given a high place. High up in the mountains, eight thousand feet above the sea, it lies in a sheltered valley surrounded by lofty hills. During the summer months it is the seat of the Madras Government and the centre of the official and social life of the Presidency.

At the foot of a hill, which rises till it culminates in the peak of Dodabeta, lies Government House; behind are the large chincona plantations, from which the bark of the trees is gradually stripped to be worked up into quinine; before it are the Botanical Gardens, beautifully laid out in broad terraces, lawns and drives, in which rare trees and shrubs and lovely flowers from all parts of the world delight the eye by their splendour and fill the air with their perfume. Charming roads, passing through meadows where masses of arum lilies and "red-hot poker" grow wild, lead to the hill, on which stand the church, post office, library and the principal shops, and then

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branch off in every direction to the pretty villas, each in its beautiful garden, which cluster on the hill-side.

Everywhere there are flowers, and the very hedges are composed of climbing geranium, heliotrope, sweet-briar and rhododendron and the houses are covered with creepers of gorgeous hues. Down in the valley, past the native bazaar, is the Hobart Park, where the cricket matches are played, round which the race-course runs, with the pavilion and grounds of the Gymkhana at the further end. Beyond this is the pleasant road which for six miles winds round the shores of the beautiful lake; and, at the end of the lake, commanding a lovely view of its whole extent and of the mountains rising in the distance, is "Woodstock," the charming estate which the Gaekwar bought some years ago and on which he built the comfortable modern house in which he spends a couple of months at rare intervals.

Here he lives with the Maharani and the Princess, and, though the ladies still have their separate apartments with a private entrance from the garden, they make frequent use of the common living rooms in the centre of the building, and the life resembles that in a country house in England far more than it does in Baroda.

The rooms are all of moderate size, and on the side facing the lake the windows open on to a spacious terrace, beneath which is a long covered

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walk running along the whole length of the house, which can be used for exercise during the rains.

The gardens are lovely, with sloping lawns and shady trees, and, on a level eminence rising above the water, are four perfect gravel courts for lawn-tennis, with a pretty summer-house adjoining them. The flowers are magnificent, and there is a grand show of dahlias.

In one corner of the garden, a subway leads under the road to Jaising Villa, another house almost as large as "Woodstock," where Shivajirao, Sampatrao and I have our bachelor quarters. Both houses have excellent stabling, and a large number of horses and carriages have been brought from Baroda.

The rest of the suite, which consists of close on a hundred people, are lodged in other bungalows near at hand or in the hotels in the town, and the servants have rooms over the stables; at night the whole place is brilliantly illuminated by electricity from a private installation.

Behind the house are large groves of eucalyptus, covered with leaves of delicate silvery green, through which wooded paths and excellent roads lead up to the downs which then stretch away for miles. The Nizam of Hyderabad and the Maharaja of Mysore have also large estates close at hand, but neither of them can rival that of the Gaekwar for beauty or for excellence of position.

Among the hundreds of charming houses that there

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are in Ooty the Gaekwar's stands supreme, and if the Maharaja lived here permanently no more care could be bestowed upon it. The gardens ablaze with flowers, the closely cropped lawns, the smooth gravel drives and walks, all give the impression of a terrestrial paradise, from which the owner was seldom far away; and yet till a month ago I had never heard of its existence.

Ooty has this great advantage over all other Indian hill-stations that you can bring your motor-car here and drive as far as you like in almost any direction, making long excursions of over a hundred miles without covering the same ground twice. Beautiful roads have been made over the downs, and run all round the vast plateau and down into the valleys, affording exquisite views of scenery as fine as any in India, except in Kashmir.

From hills covered with heather you may skirt pretty woods, *sholas* as they are here called, and pass through country covered with groves of palm trees, full of splendid tree-ferns, and overshadowed by large trees of scarlet rhododendron into valleys in which tea and coffee plantations are carefully cultivated and orange trees covered with golden fruit grow wild. Besides the carriages we have three cars with us, so that however much there may be going on we are never at a loss for means of getting about.

Wherever he may be the Gaekwar makes very little change in his habits. He has, of course, considerably

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more time at his disposal here and is able to hunt three days a week and to play tennis every day, but his reading and walking and quiet domestic pleasures go on as usual, and he devotes a good deal of time to botany and to the study of natural history, and may often be found with Dr. Jadhav in a quiet corner of the garden examining the leaves of a plant under the microscope.

“Woodstock” possesses an excellent library on such subjects, and newspapers and reviews are spread about in profusion. When nothing more exciting is happening, it is delightful to spend a quiet evening in the peaceful intimacy of his home circle, playing chess with the Maharani or draughts with Indira until the Gaekwar is ready for his rubber, and I feel even more one of the family than I do in Baroda.

But if the Gaekwar is conservative in his habits, the Maharani is still more so. Except for the change of scene, there is little variation in her placid days. Sometimes when I am passing her windows in the morning Mrs. Burrows calls me in, and I find Her Highness sitting on the ground before some new musical instrument which the grave Mohammedan artist has brought for her instruction and which she wishes me to hear.

Although the Maharani is herself wonderfully free from conventional prejudice, she is thoughtful and considerate for the feelings of the weaker brethren; and while she is living in the territory of the

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Maharaja of Mysore, whose women folk are passionately attached to the customs of the olden time, she denies herself a good deal of freedom of action which she would use without hesitation at home. For this reason Indiraraja does not hunt here, much as she would like to do so, and very seldom rides. Every afternoon she goes for a long walk attended by half a dozen girl friends and by the faithful Hingujirao, who marches along with them as escort, carrying his enormous stick and stopping every now and then to take off his *puggari* and wipe his bald head with a huge red silk handkerchief. Sometimes it is my coveted privilege to join the party, when it is understood that Indira and I prefer to enjoy one another's society without distraction from the others. So we go ahead at a good pace, while Hingujirao marshals his bevy of young ladies at a discreet distance behind. I thought that perhaps this curtailment of liberty might be irksome to Indira, and that she would be glad to get back to Baroda; but she likes this place so much that she is quite ready to give up a good deal to be here. "Oh," she said, clasping her hands and stopping to embrace it all in a rapturous glance, "Oh, I *love* Ooty!"

Shivajirao also likes Ooty very much, and is having a grand time here. Besides the hunting which he loves, he gets some cricket, and a great deal of tennis, and though Turnbull is here his duties just at present are merely nominal, and he spends his time

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very happily in the hunting-field and the ball-room. Shivajirao has practically annexed the new "Mercedes" car and is working it pretty hard.

There are a number of Zemindars staying in Ooty, young Indians of wealth and position, who are here with a tutor on a kind of Long Vacation reading party, and as Shivajirao knows them all he has no lack of friends. Besides annexing the car, he has also annexed my valuable Sanka, whose cleverness and fidelity I had praised too highly. I find that in India, if you have come across a good thing, the best plan is to say very little about it. The same fate overtook my beautiful Arab horse Dilrubah. One morning when I was riding him with the Maharaja, I praised him up to the skies. "Yes," said the Maharaja reflectively, "he is one of the best horses in the stables." A few days later the coachman told me that he had been placed on His Highness' list, and I rode him no more.

In place of Sanka I now have Yeshwant, the boy who massages so well. He is not at all bad, but he is a bit lazy, and speaks very little English, though he is picking it up gradually. So I, who am equally lazy, have had to learn a little Hindustani. This does not always come off; one day when we were at Khandala, my bath was so hot that I could not get into it, so I called out "*Kaldar pani*," which means "cold water." Off went Yeshwant and presently returned with a man bearing a large jar of water about twice as hot as the first. I got rather impatient

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and called out "*Kaldar pani*, you idiot," which sent them flying. They were away a long time, and when they did come, not only was the second man blistering his fingers with a jar of water perfectly boiling, but a third man was running along beside him, holding a small brazier of charcoal under the jar to keep it boiling. They thought I meant the water was cold! If I had told them to *bring* some cold water it would have been all right.

Yeshwant amuses me greatly. When we arrived at Ooty, I made him unpack my luggage in my presence to see what I had got. When we came to the last portmanteau, he was most unwilling to unstrap it, pretending that he had lost the key, and making a lot of ridiculous excuses. At last it was opened, and proved to be half full of whisky bottles. I was furious, but all he could do was to wring his hands, crying, "Mahableshwar, Mahableshwar." Finally, he produced a corkscrew and opened one of the bottles out of which he poured a sticky liquid; it was some of the honey which they found in the wall when hunting for the cobra. He seemed to think that he was now quite exonerated, and that it was the most natural thing in the world that he should carry his beastly bottles half over India in my best trunk.

Luckily none of them was broken; however, a pair of walking shoes had got so crushed that they pinched my toes, so I told him to take them to the shoemaker and have them mended. This he was very

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reluctant to do, and at last burst into a kind of war-dance, footing it so nimbly about the room that I nearly died with laughter. He wanted to show me how nice he would look in the shoes if I gave them to him.

We have just been celebrating the thirty-fourth anniversary of the Gaekwar's accession to the throne, which came about in the most romantic way. His immediate predecessor, Mulhar Rao, was accused of attempting to kill the English Resident by mixing powdered diamonds with his food. Serjeant Ballantyne was engaged to defend him, for which he received ten thousand pounds, the largest fee that had up to that time been paid to an English advocate. He was acquitted on the capital charge, but was deposed on grounds of maladministration. As there was no direct heir to the throne, it was determined to adopt one, and search was made for a suitable member of the Royal House.

Not far from the source of the sacred river Godavery, there is a town called Nasik, one of the most holy places of the Hindus. Thirteen hundred families of Brahmins are settled there, and all Hindus of rank on visiting it leave a record of their pilgrimage with their Upadhya, or family priest—for every noble family has such a priest at each celebrated place of pilgrimage. In this record are entered the names of the visitor's ancestors, and thus the pedigree of every

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Hindu chief is to be found in the keeping of these Upadhyas. The record of the Gaekwar family was searched, and proofs were found that legitimate descendants of the third Gaekwar's brother were in existence.

Further search resulted in the discovery of three brothers, leading the lives of the ordinary Indian peasant, tilling the ground and herding the oxen like the founder of the Gaekwar House, whose family name signifies "Cow-herd." With their near relatives they were carried to Baroda, and as the eldest boy was too old to receive fresh impressions, the second brother, who showed promise of great intelligence, was placed upon the *gadi* and is now His Highness Maharaja Sir Sayaji Rao III., G.C.S.I., whose style and titles of honour would fill one of these pages. Under the guidance of a most able tutor, his latent powers quickly developed, and when his minority came to an end he was more than fully equipped to occupy the proud position which he still so greatly adorns.

The celebration was quite private, only those in immediate attendance on His Highness being invited, and we spent a very pleasant afternoon, playing tennis, listening to speeches and recitations and drinking tea. My share in the entertainment was to recite an ode, which they had asked me to write in honour of the occasion. It was with great diffidence that I attempted the part of Poet-laureate; however, I did my best.

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My verses, I need hardly say, were very well received. One of the "courtiers," anxious to add his spoonful of "butter," said that he had only one fault to find with them; that he hated any kind of exaggeration, and that he thought I was guilty of this when I spoke of the hospital as being "by thousands blessed." The doctor came to my support with statistics as to the number of patients (in and out) who had passed through since it was opened; and our crafty friend frankly admitted that his criticism was unjust and that if he found fault with me at all, it would be for not praising His Highness enough.

Meanwhile Maharaja's face wore the inscrutable expression of one who knows how to differentiate to a scruple between panegyric, encomium and eulogy. In the evening I had to repeat my verses for the benefit of Maharani and Indira, as we sat on the hearthrug by the wood fire, for the evenings here are sometimes quite chilly. Her Highness was quite pleased and chaffed both me and Maharaja very amusingly. Indira did not say much, but the gracious look of approval which she shot at me from her bright eyes when she heard the lines about herself, far more than rewarded me for any trouble which this little composition had given me. Originally it consisted of only twenty verses, as Maharani quickly discovered, but they were all unanimous that there ought to be one more for luck, so it was written.

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HOWEVER sadly the Englishman may take his pleasures at home, he certainly manages to enjoy himself thoroughly in India. Just now the papers are full of alarming reports of the "unrest" which is said to be spreading over our vast Dependency, and occasionally it affords a subject for conversation and speculation. Apart from this, you would never think that it had any existence, for never, surely, did the rulers of an alien and conquered race undertake their duties with such a light heart as they do here.

Anxiety is not fashionable ; outwardly, at least, the official life of India is gay enough, and there is here a constant round of recreation and amusement, which ought to satisfy the most ardent votary of pleasure. Everywhere you meet with bright and happy faces, and no one seems to have a care in the world. The natives of India are naturally fond of sport, and with the facility that is inherent in their nature, they have adapted themselves readily enough to the Western idea of enjoyment which has been introduced among them.

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The great attraction of Ooty is the hunting. The downs, which extend westward for many miles, are very much like our South Downs at home, though steeper and more broken. There are no foxes, but jackals abound in the numerous wooded *sholas* with which they are covered, and afford excellent sport. There is no lack of members of the Hunt, English and native, and the pack of hounds, the constant care of an able and energetic M.F.H., would compare favourably with any in England.

Three days a week is the usual allowance, and whatever the weather may be there is always a good muster. Long before it is light, we are out of bed, and while we are fortifying ourselves for the fatigues of the day with a good breakfast, we can see the dim forms of horses and men, with a large sprinkling of the fair sex, passing in a constant stream along the shores of the lake on their way to the meet, which is usually many miles away in the hills. Those, like ourselves, who go in their motor-cars, can afford an extra hour in bed, but I think that the majority who have only their horses to depend upon, have the best of it.

The long leisurely ride in the dawning light must be delightful, and, as I see our own horses being led past our windows by the grooms while I am dressing, it makes me long to be with them myself. However, when we do arrive on the scene we find them all the fresher, very keen to take their place in the cavalcade, which

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has just begun to move away. The Governor of Madras is there with his daughters, who sit astride their horses in smart coats and the latest adaptation of masculine attire, and their example is generally followed by a large number of fresh, healthy-looking English girls, who never miss a meet and would scorn to turn back before the finish, however far from home it may take them.

Many of the men are in pink, including the Maharaja of Mysore, the Gaekwar and Shivajirao, with his bosom friend, the young Maharaja of Indore, who retain their national head-dress. How they manage to keep so many yards of muslin securely on their heads during a long day's hunting passes my understanding, and though I have often traced Shivajirao's progress through a wood by minute fragments of his sky-blue *fetah* among the branches of the trees, I have only once seen him lose it altogether, and then, still seated in the saddle, he soon folded it firmly round his temples with deft fingers. He and the Gaekwar have each brought half a dozen fine hunters with them; and my own allowance of horse-flesh has been very liberal: Mattine, the beautiful little Arab of whom I am so fond; Mirag Raj, which Her Highness kindly allows me to ride, and a very useful Irish hunter, a coal-black mare with a white star on her forehead, whom I have called Molly. Twice she has stood me in good stead when in my ignorance of the country and through not following Shivajirao's lead close

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enough, I have floundered into bogs, of which there are plenty among the hills.

There are awkward places here and there, and I have several times seen a horse so tightly jammed among the rocks of a harmless-looking watercourse that it seemed impossible ever to get it out again. Mattine makes a grand hunter, arching his flowing tail and pawing the ground with impatience, and it was all I could do to hold him until Faye, the coachman, showed me a dodge for gripping the reins, which I have found very useful.

We have had several capital runs, but as I know about as much of the language of the chase as I do of Tamil, I cannot attempt to describe them, and often at the end of a very enjoyable day I should find it hard to give an account of what exactly has happened.

I am quite happy to be flying along over the springy turf through the fresh breeze, and to find myself at the end of the day still in the saddle with no broken bones. If we are very far from home I manage to keep somewhere near the Gaekwar and come back with him in the car, which is not far away on the nearest road; but, as a rule, I ride quietly back, joining other parties who are doing the same, and in this way making many delightful friends whom I should otherwise never have met.

One morning we had a big hunt breakfast at the club, followed by a meet in the beautiful grounds

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of Fernhill, the Maharaja of Mysore's country house, where we were all photographed. His Highness is very popular with the English community and does a great deal to entertain them. Soon after our arrival he gave a large ball at Fernhill, to which we all went. There was a large crowd there, and for nearly an hour the Maharaja, magnificently attired in silks and jewels, which filled all the ladies with envy, stood in the hall receiving his guests, who arrived in one long stream of motor-cars, carriages, rickshaws and bullock-carts. There is a beautiful ballroom occupying the whole of the centre of the mansion, surrounded by a gallery, from which the ladies of his family watched the proceedings from behind *purdah* "chicks." Here and there a dark little hand would eagerly move the curtain a little, so that a pair of bright eyes might get a better view of the scene.

And a brilliant scene it was; the ladies beautifully dressed, the men nearly all in uniform, the native guests gorgeous in all the colours of the rainbow. The floor was perfect, and when at the end of each dance the company had flowed into the large conservatories and marquees erected on the lawn, an army of native servants rushed in to polish it up with French chalk, so that it went on getting better and better all through the evening. The music was excellent, being provided by the regimental band from Wellington; and I need hardly say that there was a first-rate supper, with unlimited champagne.

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At first I was afraid that I should not dance much, as I knew no one there, but the Gaekwar soon put me under the wing of the Prime Minister, who introduced me to Mrs. Whitehead, wife of the Bishop of Madras, and for the rest of the evening I had plenty of partners, and at every dance afterwards had my card full before I had been many minutes in the room. The Maharaja, with delightful courtesy, hardly ever left the ballroom, and when I went away at a late hour he was still there, saying good-bye to his guests as they departed: he must have been horribly bored, but he did not give the least sign of it. Even then there were a few pairs of eager eyes still left in the gallery. Our own ladies had been there for a short time, and made me give a full account of it all the next day.

The next week there was a large fancy dress ball at Government House, and it was great fun discovering my fair partners of the previous evening under the various charming disguises which they had adopted.

Here again everything was carried out in perfection, and the scene was very brilliant and animated. There is a large number of pretty girls in Ooty, who looked quite lovely in costumes which each had selected to display her own style of beauty to the greatest advantage. Some of the dresses were very handsome, and the native guests, wearing their most splendid jewels for the occasion, made a brave show.

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Later in the week, the Governor and Lady Lawley gave another successful entertainment, two amusing plays being presented by the members of their house-party in the large hall, which is often used as a theatre. In India amateur theatricals are very popular, and the performance was considerably above the level of shows of a similar kind which you see at home.

After this the fun became fast and furious, and for two months there were three or four dances every week. The Hunt Ball and the Bachelors' Ball took place at the club. The Masons, arrayed in the full regalia of their craft, entertained the ladies, whom they adore (no mortal can more!) in the Masonic Hall.

The "Maids of Ooty" lavished their favours upon their devoted admirers in the Assembly Rooms, and the soldiers at Wellington have shown themselves not ungrateful for them. There have also been a number of private dances, either in the hotels or at the public rooms. Bridge parties have been very popular, and I have had more invitations to dinner than I have been able to accept. There are good golf links on the downs.

On Sundays we all go to St. Stephen's Church, where I have been helping the chaplain. The Governor always attends the morning service with a mounted escort riding in front of his carriage. One day the Bishop of Madras preached, such a long

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sermon! I was sitting in the chancel just opposite the Governor's pew, and it was most amusing to watch their faces; Sir Arthur sleeping, Lady Lawley yawning, the son looking at his watch and then at the side door, which stood invitingly open just behind them, and the pretty daughters trying to conceal their smiles, as much amused as I was myself. The organ is a most powerful instrument, and the Eurasian woman who plays it gets her money's worth out of the blowers; so we are all very glad when it is over.

The monsoon, on which the prosperity of India so greatly depends, has come, and promises to be very good. It began with a terrific thunder-storm, which caught us driving in the car, miles from home. We lost our way, and the dense darkness, broken by blinding flashes of lightning, and the rain which fell in sheets, made it very difficult to find it again. We had to turn the car in a very awkward place, with a precipice on one side and a deep ditch on the other, backing and twisting in a most alarming way, and I was very glad when we got safe home.

Nothing of that kind disturbs Maharaja in the least, and I have never known him show the slightest sign of fear. He is so careless about his safety that Maharani is sometimes quite unhappy about him. She gave me a lecture on the subject one day: "You must take great care of my husband; he is no ordinary man, and his life is very precious." But I have long since realized that all my counsels of

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caution are wasted ; he simply turns a deaf ear to them.

It rained steadily for a week and then cleared up again, and since then we have been having most lovely weather, just like a very fine September in England. Maharani does not like it when it is wet and cold ; she complains bitterly when the weather is bad, and sits crouching in front of the fire and wishing herself back at home. We ought really to have come here a month earlier than we did, instead of grilling in Baroda ; but that is Maharaja's way : he seems to be quite indifferent to weather, and is very fond of going to places out of the season.

The Bishop of Madras and Mrs. Whitehead are very sociable people ; they are often out with the hounds, and she comes to all the big dances. They have a nice house in Ooty and entertain a good deal in a mild way, missionary meetings, tennis parties and that kind of thing. She is a capital talker and keeps things going wherever she is, and you are sure of meeting interesting people at her house.

There have been two very enjoyable race-meetings, one here and one at Wellington ; the gaily-dressed crowds on the lawns and in the paddock, and the background of natives in their white dresses watching the proceedings from every available eminence, and the crush of horses and carriages with the grooms in smart liveries, made the scene a very animated one.

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The Horse Show, too, was great fun, especially the race for children, where two fat little boys kept falling off their fat ponies, and being helped on again by their devoted native servants. Another tiny boy in pink, with top-boots and a velvet hunting-cap, was enjoying himself immensely. Some of the jumping was very good. Shivajirao went in for the driving competition, but did not win anything, the honours going to the young ladies, some of whom had very smart turn-outs.

About twelve miles from Ooty, and five hundred feet lower, there is a charming place called Coonoor. While the hunting people prefer Ooty, Coonoor is the paradise for those who want to play tennis, as they have less rain there. We often go over to see the Meades, who are staying there, and I have been there for several dances. A man whom I met out hunting has been very kind in putting me up at the club, which is beautifully situated on the top of the hill with a glorious view; he lives there and keeps his hunters at Ooty. All the girls out here dance well, much better than they do in England, where the really good dancers are in the minority. Here you never meet the girl who "doesn't think she vales, but would rather like to try."

They have all given me a splendid time: good tennis in the afternoon, good bridge before dinner, and most delightful dancing afterwards, with lovely places for sitting out with a charming partner under

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the glorious stars. What could a man wish for more ? I am afraid that after all this I shall find the daily round in England rather dull ; but I must not think about that just yet.

I have even been lucky enough to find a member of the Croquet Association living out here, Colonel Lowry, with whom I have had some capital games. The Gaekwar came down to watch one of them, and afterwards took part in a foursome himself. He is always ready to join in anything that is going on and to do his best to make it a success. Sometimes, of course, mishaps occur, but they are never his fault ; he has to depend a good deal on his secretaries and officials, and it is surprising that they make so few mistakes.

The other day he had arranged to take part in a motor-meet at Coonoor, and go on for a picnic among the hills. The meet was fixed for noon, which was interpreted by the secretary as "in the afternoon"! We took over two cars, intending to pick up the Meades on the way ; but, alas ! it was twelve miles beyond the rendezvous that we came up with them toiling along in rickshaws ; and when we reached the place appointed for the picnic it was practically all over, the awkward part of the whole thing being that we were responsible for bringing the provisions.

It takes a good deal to disturb the Gaekwar's equanimity, but he was really very much annoyed

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about this, as he is most punctilious in fulfilling social engagements, and there are plenty of people only too ready to criticize when things go wrong, and to lay down the law about what he ought and what he ought not to do. A few years ago he gave a big ball, and as there is no room at "Woodstock" for dancing, the Maharaja of Mysore lent him "Fernhill" for the purpose. But this year the Mysore people were there themselves, and it was hardly to be expected that the Gaekwar, who is here on a private visit and does not care a bit about dancing himself, should move heaven and earth to afford an evening's amusement for a lot of people whom he has never seen before in his life. However, when it was announced that he was to give a garden party instead, there was a great deal of grumbling, and still more when invitations were sent out for a party at the Gymkhana instead of at "Woodstock." I thought myself that this was rather a pity, as so many people would have been glad of the opportunity of seeing the beautiful gardens.

The event, however, proved that His Highness was perfectly right; everything went off splendidly and even the malcontents had to allow that it was one of the most successful events of the season. The tennis-courts were crowded, there were not enough croquet lawns to go round, and long after the dinner-hour the pavilion was full of people playing bridge. Mr. Pluck presided over the arrangements in the refresh-

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ment tents, so that part of the business left nothing to be desired; and from first to last the Gaekwar was untiring in moving about among his guests and assuring himself that all were amusing themselves in the way that most pleased them.

I had arranged another croquet foursome for him with Colonel Lowry and Turnbull, but he would not hear of it; at any other time, he said, he would be delighted to play, but this afternoon we had to think not of ourselves but of others and he had too many people to look after to take part in any games himself.

The interest which he takes in the welfare of others is, indeed, one of the most striking points in his character; and it is the more extraordinary because, in India, the typical Raja is commonly supposed to have no consideration for anyone except himself. It is delightful to see him in his library with the young Maharaja Holkar of Indore, taking down from the shelves any books which he thinks will be useful to him and then sitting down at his writing table to sketch out a plan of profitable reading.

Holkar of Indore is a fine young fellow of about the same age as Shivajirao, and they are inseparable companions, hunting and playing tennis together, and driving about all over the country in their cars. His sister is a great friend of Indira's and often comes to stay with her at Baroda. They are the descendants of Ahalaya Bai, one of the most distinguished women

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in Indian history, whose whole life was devoted to the administration of justice and acts of charity, and whose charitable foundations extend all over India. It is recorded of her that she had the courage to watch her daughter become *sati* after vainly trying to dissuade her from it. It is pleasant to observe how many of her admirable qualities our young friends seem to have inherited.

Another frequent visitor at Woodstock is the Maharaja of Alwar, a tall handsome Rajput of dignified presence and serious aspect. Clad in a long flannel coat with gold buttons and Jodhpore breeches, and wearing beautiful emerald earrings, he plays a remarkably good game of tennis, and on wet afternoons we often meet him in the racquet-court at Fernhill, where he and Nimbalker have exciting games. He is said to have some priceless Oriental manuscripts in the library of his palace, which is one of the most picturesque spots in India; and he certainly gives you the impression of a man who has been brought up among beautiful and cultured surroundings.

In striking contrast to these two is one of the smaller chiefs, a restless, unhappy-looking individual, who may be seen at all the public dances hurrying about in white kid gloves and a lofty turban, feverishly filling his programme with the names of reluctant partners who always vanish mysteriously when the time comes; all through the dances he

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wanders round the room looking for them, vaguely wondering how it is that other men seem to have no difficulty in finding their partners, and consoling himself for repeated failures by some occasional success. At all the race-meetings he may be seen lavishing hospitality upon unwilling recipients in the vain hope of winning for himself the popularity which the Maharaja of Mysore enjoys without any apparent effort to obtain it.

In spite of his insignificant stature and somewhat ungainly figure, the Maharaja of Mysore is quite the most striking personality in his own state. It is impossible to forget that the little man in the grey frock-coat tightly buttoned round his portly form, as he chats rather nervously to some fashionable woman or sporting subaltern, is not only the ruler of some thirty thousand square miles of country, but that he is also held in such veneration by six millions of subjects that at one of the great festivals he must sit for days in awful magnificence upon his throne while they worship him with divine honours.

In this one man all the strange problems which beset the mingling of East with West, of ancient with modern, of the sublime with the ridiculous, seem to be summed up; and one can only guess in vain at the thoughts which are passing through the brain concealed behind that amiable countenance, which at one moment appears wreathed with brightest smiles, at the next sunk in deepest

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melancholy. Probably he has so much to think about that he does not think at all, like the Persian philosopher in Tolstoy's tale, who had meditated so much on the attributes of the Deity that he had become an atheist.

Since I have been in India the Parsis have interested me very much, and as there are a good many of them staying in Ooty just now I have gone to some trouble to get acquainted with them, and succeeded so well that not only have I been invited to visit many of them in their homes but have even been the only European guest at a big banquet at which they were all assembled, when many speeches were made in praise of England as the protector of the poor and of the Parsi race in particular.

The Todas, who are to be found only in Ooty, are a curious aboriginal hill tribe, who are fast dying out, in spite of the efforts of the Government to preserve them. They must at one time have been a singularly handsome race, and many of their faces are still quite beautiful, though the limbs are shrunken and attenuated almost to deformity.

Only a few hundred yards from the club and one of the best hotels are the miserable hovels, shaped like large bee-hives, into which they crawl through a small, round aperture, and near them is the sacred enclosure, something like a village pound, into which no stranger is allowed to penetrate. They speak a

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curious liquid language, which resembles the warbling of birds.

Soon after our arrival at Woodstock, a large crowd of them assembled one morning outside the gates and sat there all day, in the hope of seeing the Gaekwar come out. Sometimes when out hunting we have come across an isolated Toda hut far away among the hills. If you pass along the road near their main encampment, the women and girls will follow you for some distance, twittering and trying to attract attention. Their only covering is a rough blanket, and this they remove at the smallest encouragement in the hope of receiving a few *annas* as a reward for the sad spectacle. Even if nothing can be done to improve the condition of these wretched outcasts, this at least might well be discouraged, as it is degrading not only to the miserable creatures themselves, but also to the civilized society, which for its amusement places them on a lower level than the beasts of the field. Of the Todas, then, let this much have been said.

JULY

“ALL things come to an end,” says the Psalmist, and it was with much regret that we saw the day dawn on which we were to leave Ooty. The sun was shining brightly, and the gardens had never looked more lovely than they did as we drove through them for the last time: the waters of the lake were laughing in the sunbeams, and the lawns of the Gymkhana, where we had spent so many happy hours, were looking beautifully green and smooth.

We stopped at the confectioner's to get a big box of chocolates for Indira, and then started on the long drive to Mettapulyan, the railway station far away down in the plains, passing for hour after hour through most lovely scenery. Half way down we rested for an hour in a beautiful garden, where experiments are made with tropical plants. All the way down the roads were excellent, winding in and out along the sides of the mountains covered with luxuriant foliage, beneath which the brawling waters of the river raced by a score of waterfalls to the plains.

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When we reached the station, we were reminded that for two months we had not known what it was to be really hot, but as soon as we were in the train it was all right. When we reached the main line we dined together in the refreshment room at the junction and then parted company for a week. Their Highnesses were going to Madura, so that Indira might see the great temples in the neighbourhood; but the Gaekwar thought that it would be more amusing for me to accept the invitation which the Maharaja of Mysore had given me to stay with him at Bangalore for the race week. So Nimbalker, who was not sorry to have a holiday, came on with me to Bangalore, which we reached early the next morning. As the Maharaja himself was staying in the palace, we were quartered in the "Cottage," a very comfortable guest-house in the garden, quite close to the palace. Both here and at Mysore the Maharaja entertains on a lavish scale during the race week, and I need hardly say that we were most hospitably entertained and made exceedingly comfortable.

The Maharaja was, of course, very busy, and I only saw him twice, having tea with him on the day of our arrival and paying a farewell call, but his brother, the Yuvaraj, who is the heir-presumptive, looked after us well and took us out every day for a drive in his car. He is an extremely pleasant and agreeable young man and speaks English perfectly. We had seen a good deal of him at Ooty, where he was

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always very much in evidence when any horses were about.

We had a very gay week, the races and the polo tournament taking place on alternate days. The weather was good on the whole, though one afternoon the play was stopped by a tremendous downpour, which drove us first to the tents and then to our carriages. All the regiments and clubs had tents in which they entertained guests, and there were crowds of pretty women about, all very well turned out. So many of them had been at Ooty that I had no lack of partners for the dances which took place every night, and I had the advantage of being under the wing of Colonel Desraj Urs, who has the gift of getting on better with Englishmen than any native I have ever met, except, perhaps, Ranjitsinhji. He is a great sportsman, and was the life and soul of the meeting both indoors and out. It was all very jolly, everyone was so kind and hospitable, and I was very sorry when it was over.

In India it is an enormous help to be a *padre*; your collar is a passport everywhere, and everyone you meet treats you as an old friend whom he has known all his life. Before you have been in a strange place five minutes some nice well-groomed boy comes up with a smiling face and cheery voice, to ask, "How are you getting on, Padre? Have you got everything you want?"

The rain was pouring down when we left Bangalore,

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and the country through which we passed was almost under water. The next afternoon we drew up at Londa Junction, where we found their Highnesses' saloon waiting to be attached to our train; they were on the look-out for us and called to me to join them, so I made a dash for it and was almost drowned crossing the platform.

We had a merry little dinner together, at which the Maharani told them to give me some champagne, and when I asked why she spoiled me so much, she said that it was because it was my birthday, a fact which I had quite forgotten! When I returned to my own compartment, I found Nimbalker hobnobbing with a young Hindu, the son of a rich Bombay merchant, who seemed to have had quite enough to drink. Presently Nimbalker left us to attend upon the Gaekwar, and soon after the youth came and sat down beside me and began to talk in the most familiar way, using language which no gentleman in England would dream of using. I was furious and took no notice of him; luckily the train soon stopped at a station, so I opened the door and told him to clear out; at first he tried to be insolent, but when he saw that I was getting very angry he slunk off like a whipped dog. Nimbalker was, of course, very apologetic when I told him about it. There are no doubt objectionable people to be found everywhere in the world, but this is the only time that I have been rudely treated by a native in India. Sometimes they are inclined to

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be a bit cheeky, but as a rule they are extremely polite.

It was still raining hard when we reached Poona early the next morning, and the meet of the hounds which we passed a few miles out of the town looked anything but cheerful. We stayed there for a fortnight. A very nice bungalow looking on to the polo ground, called Polo Vista, had been engaged for their Highnesses, and rooms had been taken for me at the Connaught Hotel, where I was fairly comfortable.

The Gaekwar was very much engaged, and Shivajirao and Turnbull had gone back to Baroda the week before we left Ooty, so I was thrown on my own resources to a certain extent during the day, generally dining and spending the evening at Polo Vista. Luckily I found some very pleasant people in the hotel, the Russian, Turkish and Persian Consuls, and a very beautiful and charming Jewish lady, who played the piano and sang delightfully, and who was also something of a poetess.

The manager had hired a new Bechstein specially for her from Bombay, and we made a great deal of music together. I have long had it in my mind to write a new Baroda National Anthem, as the one they have got is not up to much and has no traditional value; and here I had a real inspiration for it, just the thing I wanted, short and sweet and so "catchy" that my lovely Jewess sat down to the piano and played it straight away after she had heard it

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once. It has a good bass, and when I have orchestrated it for a military band, it ought to sound rather fine.

They brought Mattine there for me and I rode him every morning and went out several times to Kirkee to lunch with the Bishop of Bombay and Brinton, who have a house there. The Bishop is still frightfully keen on his new work and is learning Mahratti, which he studies for some hours every day; he is also improving his riding in the military riding-school and is learning to jump. Brinton is in charge of one of the churches in Poona, where I went to help him on the Sundays.

We generally spent the afternoon at the Gymkhana Club, which is very good and comfortable; very often the string band of the regiment was playing there, very well and good music. Or when it was fine, we went down to the Bund, a beautiful garden on the bank of the river, where the natives, chiefly Parsis, come in the evening in their carriages and walk about. Just beyond it there is a fine bridge over the river, which is very broad here; it was much swollen by the rains, and came over the weir with a grand swirl. Nearly everywhere in India there is some place where the people meet together at sunset to stroll about and chat; it is a pleasant custom.

One evening at dinner Maharaja felt a pain in one of his teeth. He was greatly concerned about it, and a telegram was sent to the principal dentist in

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Bombay asking him to come over the next day. Dr. Jadhav fitted up one of the rooms in the bungalow as a surgery, with a proper dentist's chair and all complete. However, there was nothing the matter. I asked him to have a look round my teeth, and he found a small hole which wanted stopping. While he was doing it, he amused me by telling me of a curious experience which he had a little time ago. The ruler of a country not a hundred miles from India (as you might say), a very big personage indeed, came to him for treatment. While the tooth was being stopped, the large suite which he had brought with him stood respectfully behind the chair. The dentist was as careful as possible not to hurt his patient, but once he got rather near the nerve and the great man winced. One of the courtiers put his hand up to his mouth to hide a smile; but he had forgotten a large mirror hanging before them on the wall. When it was all over, the great personage rose, and turning to the unlucky courtier, told him to sit down in the chair which he had just left. Then, turning to the dentist, he said calmly: "Please pull out all his teeth." The dentist declined to do so on professional grounds, although the wretched victim professed himself only too willing to have the inevitable operation performed by a skilful hand. So they all departed to find some more venal executioner.

I told the dentist that he was wrong. As he knew the man would have to lose his teeth anyhow, he

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ought to have put as much guilt on the bitter pill as he could. But he said that he could not tackle such a cold-blooded job, as he had never in his life seen a more perfect set of teeth. It is a nice point for the casuists.

On the way back to Baroda, we stayed for a few days in Bombay, putting up at the Taj Mahal. Maharani had stayed behind in Poona for a few days longer, so our "pitch up," as a Wykehamist would say, consisted of Maharaja, Indira and myself, a new combination. We drove about together all over the place, and at the luncheon and dinner table Indira made a perfect hostess. I often wonder which of the Indian Maharajas she will marry; he will indeed be a lucky man, for I have not yet come across any-one who is half good enough for her.

One day when they had a luncheon engagement, Maharaja suggested that I might amuse myself by going over to Elephanta to see the famous caves, which are on an island in the bay, and said that Sanka, who was then waiting on him, had better go with me to make the arrangements and act as my guide.

We got a very comfortable sailing-boat, with awnings and plenty of cushions, and took lunch with us. It took us some time to get there, as there was very little wind, and the men had to row a good part of the way. Sanka was very pleased to be with me again, and told me a lot of amusing things about his

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wife and children, of whom he is very proud. He is taking a good deal of trouble about his wife's education, and showed me a letter which she had written to him in Mahratti, and certainly it was beautifully done.

We climbed up a path through the woods to the caves, which are magnificent. There are several of them, hollowed out from the rock, and the walls are covered with ancient sculptures of Hindu mythology. Naturally a discussion on religion followed, and I asked him if he could tell me the difference between Buddhism and Hinduism. He promptly replied, "There is no difference between the religion of the Buddhists and the religion of the Hindus, only the Buddhists like their gods naked and the Hindus like them dressed!" The keeper of the caves had a tame monkey, which we fed with cake.

The view of the bay, with its islands, and the mainland in the distance, was very fine. In the afternoon a fresh breeze sprang up, and we returned home very quickly, flying before the wind, with the water curling over our bows and the salt spray whipping our faces; most invigorating and delightful.

And now I must tell you about the most extraordinary sight I have yet seen in India. As it is the kind of thing you do not get in the guide-books, I shall try to describe it at some length.

Probably as a peace-offering for having inflicted the outrageous Hindu cad upon me in the train, Nimbalker

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asked me if I would like to see a Hindu funeral. One of his relations, a man of some wealth and position, had just died, and the cremation was to take place that night. Knowing the reverent interest that I would take in the sad proceedings, his friends would feel honoured if I would attend the ceremony. I accepted with alacrity.

At one o'clock in the morning we stood before the house; the door was open, and we could see the body laid out upon a bier in the dimly-lighted hall. The dead man was lying upon his back, clearly outlined beneath the veil of white silk in which he was wrapped.

At the foot of the bier the mourners stood, grave and motionless, while one of them performed the ceremonial rites, murmuring words which I could not understand, in deep, monotonous tones. Taking an urn hanging on chains, he walked slowly round the body, sprinkling it for a long time with holy water from the Ganges, which Hindus must always carry with them wherever they go.

Then the bier was raised upon the shoulders of four men, and the procession moved slowly forward. The moon had set, leaving the empty streets in darkness, but the white silk shroud caught every ray of light, and the body upon the bier seemed luminous.

It was an impressive sight; the clear form of the dead passing through the night, borne by men whose skin was so dark that you could not distinguish their

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faces and hands; only their garments were dimly visible. Wrapped in my overcoat, I felt an incongruous and intrusive figure among the mourners who followed the bier.

At intervals, the four bearers stopped for a few moments to take breath, and then went on with ever shorter steps as they bent under their burden. At length we reached the Hindu burial-ground, separated only by the width of the road from the beach and from the sea, whose murmurings filled our ears as it moved restlessly under the starlit sky.

The funeral pile, slightly longer than it was broad, was about four feet in height. The position of the polar star was ascertained, and the dead nobleman was stretched upon the wood with his feet turned towards the sacred city of Benares. Twelve bottles of petroleum were poured over him, and he was then completely covered with planks of pine. For nearly an hour his relations and servants continued to raise the pile, till it resembled the huge stacks of wood which you sometimes see on a wharf. Several bags of shavings were emptied on the summit and twenty bottles of oil poured over them. A few paces away a light trembled in a little lamp of bronze, which had been lit on the arrival of the body.

The moment had come. The relations went to fetch the fire. A torch soaked in oil was kindled, and suddenly a flame shot up, lighting up the weird scene. The Indians raised their hands to heaven, and

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their shadows, falling upon the high gateway of the cemetery, looked to me like the colossal images of the gods which I had seen the day before upon the walls of the temple. The effect was so striking and unforeseen that I felt my heart beat as though some supernatural apparition had suddenly risen before my eyes. The ancient deities seemed to be watching their son, whose spirit was so soon to ascend to them in a fiery chariot.

They disappeared as the fire was brought. The shavings on the top of the pile were lighted; then the fire gained the wood, and a strong light illuminated the groves of cypress, the beach and the foam of the waves breaking on the shore. From minute to minute it grew, lighting up the dancing crests of the waves far away at sea.

A gusty breeze from the bay was blowing and quickened the ardour of the flames, which shot up and twisted and then again sank low, throwing out a myriad sparks. In a frenzied dance, they mounted above the trees and were lost amid the twinkling stars of heaven. Seabirds, awakened by the glare, came circling overhead with plaintive cries, passed with white wings extended into the glow of the flames and then disappeared again into the night.

Soon the pyre was one sheet of fire, not red but yellow, the blinding yellow of a furnace lashed by the wind. And all at once, after an unusually strong gust, it tottered and partly collapsed on the side

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towards the sea. The dead body, which until now had been hidden, appeared again in all its terrible glory to our horrified gaze, lying black upon its couch of fire and burning with long blue flames. It was immediately covered with fresh wood, and the fire began to blaze again more furiously than ever. Now and then smoke and sparks were blown into our faces, but no odour was perceptible save that of burning oil and fragrant pinewood.

So the hours passed away, while the Hindus, sitting in a semicircle, watched the departure of their kinsman with sad, solemn faces. At length the day began to break, and as the great bell in the cathedral tower tolled the hour of five nothing was left but a heap of ashes. The mourners gathered them reverently together, and we went with solemn steps down to the seashore, where they cast part of them to the wind and part upon the sea. The little that remained was sealed up in a brazen urn, which they carried away with them to their home, there to spend the day in lamentation.

The cremation was perfectly carried out, with singular skill and remarkable dignity. All the rites demanded by their religion had been fulfilled. Their dead reposed in peace.

Now that I have seen a man burnt upon a funeral pyre, I feel that when my own turn comes to leave this world I should wish to disappear in the same way. It is all over so soon. Man hastens the slow

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work of Nature instead of retarding it. The flesh is dead, the spirit has fled away. That which just now was a human being is dispersed in a few hours by cleansing fires, which throw it to the wind in the form of air and ashes.

That is right and seemly. Our own rite of burial, beautiful though it is in many ways, has still much about it which is shocking and distressing, and cannot approach the grandeur, the beauty and solemnity of the pyre blazing beneath the majestic canopy of heaven.

The same evening we left by the night mail for Baroda, which we reached at five o'clock the next morning. As soon as we had bathed, Maharaja took me out for a ride. I hardly knew Baroda again; when we left, it was all brown and baked up, and now it is beautifully green. Grass is growing everywhere, even on the roads, and the track on the race-course is now lovely turf instead of dry earth. The fertile country seems to have burst into a chorus of thanksgiving for the blessing of the rain, and prosperity and happiness are assured for another year at least.

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WE are staying this month at the Makarpura Palace, which is four miles away from Baroda along a well-made road, perfectly straight, with a stream of water flowing in a conduit on one side, so that it can always be kept well watered, and a riding track on the other. I drove over with Maharaja in the morning, Maharani came in the afternoon, and everyone else turned up in the course of the day.

In the evening as I was coming back from my ride, I passed a curious procession which was just arriving at the palace. First came a troop of Lancers with two kettledrums, and then six men on foot bearing an empty litter covered with flowers. When we met at dinner I asked what it was all about. Shiva-jirao smiled and said, "Lares et Penates," at which Her Highness looked rather annoyed and said with some emphasis, "No, Mr. Weeden, *not* household gods." She did not vouchsafe any further explanation, but it was evidently some symbol of royalty which was accompanying them on their change of residence, and which can have a procession all to itself without giving them the trouble of joining in.

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Her Highness is very religious, and if they were the sacred images from her private chapel she would not care to have them made a subject of secular conversation.

The entrance to the palace is through an archway under a lofty gate-tower; on either side of the broad drive are beautiful gardens filled with palms and flowers, among which are some beautiful pieces of sculpture, notably two gigantic bulls in bronze, the work of a celebrated French sculptor. In front of the two principal porches are fountains playing into large basins made of green tiles. The wing on the left belongs to the Gaekwar, that on the right to the Maharani, and they are connected by a long covered corridor behind which rises a round tower, which can be seen many miles away above the tree-tops.

The front of the palace is of red brick faced with stone, and is a modern addition; but at the back the original building has been left untouched and the quaint galleries and staircases of carved wood are very picturesque.

Behind the house the exquisite gardens, the work of an expert from Kew, extend for many acres, and are too beautiful for me to attempt to describe them. The most striking thing in them is a magnificent conservatory of carved marble, over a hundred yards long and with two broad transepts springing from a central dome, filled with lofty palms and rare ferns. Beyond the tennis and croquet lawns is a bandstand,





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which Maharaja uses in the morning as a study and in which we frequently dine in the evening.

A charming feature of the grounds is the large lake, on which many pelicans, flamingoes and swans, black and white, have their home. Chinese bridges with pagodas in the middle of them, painted with red, green and gold, lead to a large rockery, the favourite haunt of a number of white peacocks, from the top of which you get a fine view of the palace and gardens; and beyond it again is a large garden sunk deep beneath the level of the ground, where paths of red sandstone covered with ferns and Alpine plants afford a cool retreat in the hottest weather.

If you want to be still cooler you have only to go to the large covered swimming-bath, varying from three to ten feet in depth, complete with spring-board, water-chute and comfortable dressing-rooms; and there is also a large theatre, in which companies from Baroda sometimes give performances in the evening. Beyond the pleasure grounds, as the house agents love to call them, is a spacious zoological garden, in which emus, antelopes, ostriches and wild boars roam at will. The hippopotamus tank is empty at present, the last occupant having inconsiderately died—a way animals have in India.

The other day a new beast arrived, a handsome reindeer white as milk. I saw him come and told them in the evening that I had never seen a more beautiful animal; so next morning Maharani set off

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with me to have a look at him. Alas! some brilliant under-keeper had left a tap running during the night, and all that Her Highness saw was a disreputable object covered with black mud. With native servants about you must never raise your hopes too high.

The greatest joy of the gardens are the pelicans; they will waddle contentedly after you all the afternoon, hoping to be fed with bread, and love to be stroked on their long, absurd beaks. One of them—we call him Billy—has grown so tame that it is one man's work to keep him out of the house; he walks up the steps as though the whole place belonged to him, and flutters away in a great temper when he is denied admission.

For the last week Colonel and Mrs. Meade have been staying here with their son Dick and their niece Mrs. Chitty, a beautiful and charming lady whom I met in Bangalore. She has a dear little girl, Kathleen, who is followed about everywhere by her devoted attendant Pickle, a rough-haired terrier. During their visit we have been very gay with garden-parties and dinners, Maharaja sending the cars into Baroda for the convenience of his guests.

We have been dining lately in Her Highness' apartments and coming over afterwards to the large drawing-room, which is on Maharaja's side of the house.

The Colonel is a good bridge-player and we have great battles every evening, he and Maharani taking

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on the Gaekwar and myself and usually beating us, as Her Highness is a fine player and never forgets a card. Shivajirao and Dick Meade betake themselves to the billiard-room, where we join them later, and the more frivolous members of the party troop off to the Durbar hall, a large empty room, where they play games of a very amusing nature if one may judge from the shouts of laughter which we hear in the distance.

With the exception of the Durbar hall, in which are some interesting portraits of former rulers by native painters, the palace is furnished in modern style. Its greatest treasure is a grand picture in the drawing-room, "Judith," by Benjamin Constant.

On the whole I like being here better than at Lakshmivilas; it is not so splendid, but there is more comfort. My own rooms on the top floor on the east are quite delightful, my bedroom and dressing-room facing south and the study north, and there is a spacious verandah where I get the morning sun and which is beautifully cool in the afternoon.

We have been out several mornings shooting, and Her Highness is as keen and active as anyone, shooting from horseback when the country is too rough for driving. We go out into the jungle on the side away from Baroda, where there is plenty of game. Just outside the big wall which encloses the Makarpura "compound" there is a large game preserve extending for miles, and the villages are few and far between.

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Maharani is looking wonderfully well after her holiday, with a rich, warm colour. Indira is very busy just now preparing for her Matriculation examination, which comes off in November. She reads all the morning and afternoon with Sampatrao's daughters under a shady tree in the garden.

Cricket is now in full swing and we have matches nearly every day, for which we go into Baroda. It is extraordinary how much the game appeals to the native mind: on every bit of level ground small boys may be seen playing, and there is always a big crowd at the matches when the cricket-ground is open to the general public. The match against the Deccan College from Poona was won by twenty-two runs, and some of the other matches have had close finishes. The visiting teams are put up at the guest-house, and there is a capital lunch every day in the big hall of the Maharaja's School. Shivajirao makes a splendid captain and is very popular with his team, who are all great enthusiasts.*

The most amusing feature of the garden-parties is the "Parrot Sports," as they are called on the programme. An ingenious Mohammedan has trained some twenty small green parrots to do a number of tricks, and as they perform very well it is amusing to watch them. One of them rides a bicycle, another fires off a gun, ramming in the charge, pouring in the powder, and then applying the match, and is always in a great flutter when the explosion takes

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place. Another shoots at a target with bow and arrows, while two of them go through a most comical gymnastic performance. The best of it is that they all seem to enjoy it so much; they are just like a lot of small children who have been taught to do a little play, quite happy and excited.

Other men bring cocks for cock-fighting, and quails too, which fight even more fiercely; they are so quick in their movements that they seem only to be flying over one another's heads until you see the feathers flying about. The hen birds are placed near in cages, and urge on the combatants with shrill cries, often knocking the cages over in their excitement.

These games are a source of great interest and amusement to Kathleen Chitty and to Indomatti and Lakshmi Devi, who have come out here to keep her company. Kathleen jumps about and claps her hands with delight, but the two little Indian girls look on with wide, wondering eyes and serious faces. They are enjoying it just as much as she is, but they are not so demonstrative.

Mrs. Chitty is Irish, full of life and fun, and as it generally falls to my lot to look after her, I have a very good time. One evening at dinner she asked me what Maharaja's nickname was, as she was sure I had given him one by this time. The Gaekwar pricked up his ears, and when I said that I had often tried to think of one that would fit him but had not been successful he gave a grim smile, as who should say,

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‘ Lucky for you, my boy, that you have not.’ These Indians do not seem to lend themselves to nicknames so readily as we do. Shivajirao often calls Sanka *Wagh*, “tiger,” but it is really only his surname.

I was very sorry when our guests left us. On the last night of their visit we went into Baroda to see a travelling circus. Some of the horses were very clever, but it was all very much like the same kind of show in England. The most original “turn” was an elephant who rode a huge tricycle with a lion strapped on to his back; neither of them seemed quite happy about it.

At the end they put up a flimsy-looking iron cage in the arena and then filled it with a van-full of tigers; a man then entered the cage with a whip and made the tigers jump through hoops blazing with petroleum. Some of the tigers were rather nasty about it, and I think he must have been relieved when he came out again safely. The place was not very large, and as our seats were right in the front I have had enough of wild animals to last me for some time. There was a most appalling band, but the lions were merciful and we did not hear much of it.

As many of the ladies are keen on croquet but have not much idea how to play it, an exhibition match was arranged one afternoon between Turnbull and myself, and everyone was invited to watch it.

A tent was put up for refreshments and the band gave a selection of music. The court was in perfect

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order, and the more intelligent of the boys in green and gold were placed round it to field the balls. We played the best of three games, and as Turnbull nearly always beats me I quite expected him to win the match.

In the first game I never had a look in and he won it by twenty-eight points. The second game was a very good one and I only secured it by the narrow margin of three points, after pegging out his rover ball. In the last game he was well ahead and looked like winning. At last I was left with a long shot and sixteen points to make, but the balls were in such a position that I told the Maharani that a good player might get out in the next turn if he shot in, without dreaming for a moment that I could do it. However the unexpected happened, and after peeling my partner ball through the last two hoops I secured the game and the match.

Their Highnesses' eldest son, Prince Jaisinhrao, has arrived for just a short visit from America, where he is at Harvard, and Maharani, who is very fond of him, is delighted. He is as different as possible from Shivajirao, rather small and very slight, and not so handsome. He is not very keen on games, and seems to find the heat rather trying. He has become very American in all his ways and even speaks with a pronounced American accent, much to the Maharaja's surprise and horror, though I don't know what else he could expect.

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The Harvard friend whom he has brought with him is a very unconventional person and plays the part of the bull in the china-shop from morning till night. At tennis he wields his "club," as he calls his racquet, with more energy than skill, and he makes us all skip around in the most bewildering way—a regular Yankee at the Court of King Arthur. In order to secure a little peace the Gaekwar has offered to stand him a tour through Northern India, and he is now making things hum at the Privy Purse offices and teaching the fat clerks who throng that sacred building to sit up and hustle.

The Gaekwar has lately taken a fancy to having a good many Americans in his service. One of them is Miss McLean, the lady who reads with Her Highness for an hour or two every day and spends the rest of her time learning to ride a horse, to which she is passionately attached and which she is commonly supposed to feed with her own fair hands out of a silver bucket. She is clever and amusing, and has established a kind of *salon*, where a Mohammedan Judge, the Court Painter, the Artistic Adviser and the Director of Commerce meet to discuss tea, music and kindred topics. The last named is also an American and is continually devising new schemes for bringing Baroda up to date. His latest inspiration has been to buy up all the discarded tramways from Bombay and galvanize them into life here, line, cars, horses and all. The streets of the city are

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hideous with creaking wheels and clanging bells, and the roads are up in every direction, for the system is to be extended into the country for the benefit of the rural population; which means, I suppose, that so many miles of rail have been bought and have to be dumped down somewhere.

This new departure is not popular with the members of the Lapait Club, whose evening drives have become impossible, nor has it received the benediction of Sergeant-Major Faye, the Maharaja's coachman, who has hard work to prevent his horses from catching the horrible foot disease with which the Bombay screws are infecting the streets.

However, in spite of the crowds of smug natives who prefer sitting packed like herrings in a barrel to the trouble of walking to their homes, the cars are not paying their way, and it is hoped, by no one more than Maharaja himself, that they will soon be allowed to fall to pieces altogether.

It is rumoured that another expert from America is on his way out to take charge of the Public Library, and if he succeeds in infusing some kind of order into that chaotic department he will certainly be doing something to justify his existence.

There is a magnificent collection of books, many splendid volumes brought from England by the Gaekwar, which are housed in one of the spacious halls of the Old Palace, but they are badly arranged and cared for, and the system on which they are

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issued to the public is so imperfect that there is a serious leakage, which grows worse every day.

The present librarian is one of those unfortunate products of modern educational methods who have unbounded confidence in their own powers and very little knowledge to back it up. Yesterday when I was getting some books from the library he came swaggering up to give me his views on an article which I had sent a few days before to the *Times of India*. As he evidently knew nothing whatever about it, I asked him if he had read my article. "No," he said, "I have not yet cast my eye over it, but I am credibly informed that it contains several accuracies." I thanked him for his very pertinent observation.

With men of this kind Maharaja is wonderfully patient, but he knows where to draw the line, and woe to the luckless wight who has deserved his displeasure. Soon after my arrival in Baroda I asked him what had become of K——, one of the secretaries who travelled with us in Europe and who gradually fell a victim to habits of intemperance. "He is dead," said his Highness laconically, and I was not greatly surprised to hear it. So I was rather startled one day when we were at Mahableshtar to meet K—— in the street, looking remarkably well and flourishing, a very fleshy ghost. He greeted me with much enthusiasm and when we parted he said with great amiability, "Be so kind as you have been, that is all." I told Maharaja that he must have

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been misinformed about K——'s death, as I had met him that afternoon very much alive. His Highness was much amused and said with a sweet smile, "I meant that he was dead politically." So far as he was concerned his erring subject had ceased to exist.

We have had a good deal of rain lately. Shiva-jirao went to Bombay two days ago for a cricket match, but came back this morning as it had been abandoned on account of the weather, and yesterday it never stopped raining once. It does not, however, seem a bit cooler, and indeed this muggy, damp heat is the most trying of all. Your clothes never seem dry and everything gets rusty or covered with mould. The pianos are all out of tune and the tennis-racquets keep breaking their strings. It is not at all the kind of weather for letter-writing; the paper is damp and soft and the ink runs wherever your fingers have touched it.

Luckily I have been keeping wonderfully well and have escaped the epidemic of boils from which so many of my friends are suffering. Maharaja has been ill for the last week and has taken refuge in Her Highness' apartments, where I visit him every day. She is a capital nurse and looks after him well, letting him grumble as much as he likes and keeping him constantly amused. While he has been on the sick-list the services of the chef have been devoted entirely to him, and we have been left to the tender mercies—more tender than their meat—of the native

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cooks, much to the disgust of Shivajirao, who is a bit of an epicure.

Some of the dishes on their menus are amusing reading. The other day we had "Yam Roasted," which led to a little gambling. I backed lamb, Shivajirao ham, and Turnbull jam! We were all wrong, as it proved to be game—snipe and partridge. The decorations of the table are just now the favourite resort of the large number of insects which fly into the house in this weather. The large green grasshoppers are very beautiful, and we make them have jumping matches by touching their tails; and a good deal of fun can be got out of a beetle imprisoned in a wineglass.

Lizards dart about upon the walls in search of unwary victims, and there is altogether rather too much animal life about to be pleasant. They are quite harmless as a rule, though some of the spiders will bite you if they get the chance. Outside, as soon as the tide of night has imperceptibly covered the land, the amorous light of the fireflies begins to throb among the trees.

As darkness comes on the whole country is covered by these living sparks, dancing as they have danced there for thousands of years. As you drive along the road you see them quivering in the grass and in the bushes, chasing one another from side to side, and sometimes in their flight spreading a flaming arch across the path.

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Meanwhile swiftly and silently the grass grows apace, and everywhere there are women cutting it; from my window I can see six or seven of them at work, crouching like large red poppies among the green. They ply their small curved knives rapidly, and soon have enough to make a large bundle, which they secure with cord; leaning back against it, they grasp it with hands bent over the shoulders and then with a great muscular effort rise to their feet and move slowly away, staggering beneath the burden. They are away so long that they must have to carry it some considerable distance. A few labourers with scythes and a wagon would do twice the work in half the time; but that is not the way in India. Like tiny insects that build islands of coral till they rise above the surface of the ocean, the myriads of India do their work by small degrees, slowly and imperceptibly, but surely.

Just now one of the wings of the palace is being extended, but the bricks used for the work, instead of coming thundering up in carts behind a traction engine, are tied in neat little packets, like tea or sugar, on to the backs of some fifty donkeys, who wander leisurely along with them.

The Gaekwar has, indeed, one steam-roller for mending the drives in the compound, and sometimes it is sent out to work on the roads in the city, but it always looks out of place and unhappy. In spite of steam and electricity and motor power, the chief

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work of this vast continent must ever be done little by little by the countless hordes of workers who swarm over its surface.

In this labour women take their part equally with men, and for every pretty girl with bright eyes and plump limbs there are a hundred crones prematurely aged by a life of toil, who trouble themselves no longer to draw their veils over their withered, wrinkled faces, while all flesh has long vanished from the bony limbs, over which the skin is tightly drawn like parchment.

Now that the end of the rainy season is approaching, the villagers are swarming into the city for the Cocanut Festival; they come in companies twenty or thirty strong, the women carrying the babies straddling on their hips and the family baggage poised upon their heads, quite content to play the part of beast-of-burden for which nature has designed them; while their lords follow leisurely behind, protecting their august heads against rain or sun with the family umbrella. They carry with them the cocoanuts which they will throw into the river, thence to be carried to the sea, so that the gods who send the rain may be advertised that we have had quite enough of it.

Every morning during the festival they repair to the river to perform ceremonial ablutions, and the spot chosen is a very beautiful one, where the river, winding through the Public Park beneath steep banks



BATHING PLACE.

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covered with abundant foliage, passes the great flights of stone steps, extending for a hundred yards along the bank, which lead from the bathing-place to a beautiful group of temples, whose graceful domes are the home of flocks of pigeons, and whose sun-washed courts are planted with many a shady tree.

The scene is so bright and animated, such a continual feast of form and colour, that you can watch it for hours with interest from the opposite bank, and the crowd is not too great to prevent you from following the movements of each party as it arrives. Some of the women are timid of the water and wash their clothing bit by bit, crouching on the lowest step and deftly managing to observe a decorous demeanour which would compare favourably with that of many a mixed-bathing party at our own seaside resorts ; others will venture boldly in and splash about with evident enjoyment.

It is like watching a conjuring trick to see them exchange their wet clothing for the dry garments which they have brought with them without any loss of modesty or display of bare limbs. The water is wrung from the wet clothes, which are then laid out in the temple courts to dry while their owners make an offering at the shrine ; and as they walk happily away they do not forget the needs of the beggars who line the roadside for nearly a mile, and many *pice* are mingled with the streams of rice and sesame which are poured into the sheet spread out before them.

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The villagers then generally make their way to the Museum, sitting outside on the ground for hours until their turn comes to be admitted. Parties of thirty are let in every quarter of an hour after a good-humoured struggle at the gates, which are inexorably slammed in the face of the unsuccessful. Once inside, they are hurried round as fast as possible by the attendants, who shout out "*Jhelao*" (the great word in India for making people move) at the top of their voices if they see anyone standing still for a moment. These attendants are marvellously stupid and have left the cases of exhibits which run round the galleries still covered with long strips of green baize, which slip down into the hall below every few minutes and are then brought up again and replaced by the angry guardians of the place, who seize on imaginary offenders and hustle them with loud cries out of the building, returning just in time to see another long strip fluttering down and go through the same performance again.

The sightseers have not the smallest appreciation of anything that they look at ; their one idea is to see everything, and their eager eyes wander restlessly from one case to another so that nothing may be missed. When they get outside probably only three of the thousands of objects their eyes have rested on remain in their minds. One is a beautiful recumbent statue of Eve by an Italian artist, on the grand staircase, at which the men giggle rather shamefacedly, while the women are at no pains to conceal the scorn they feel

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for such an abandoned hussy. By the time they have reached the stuffed buffalo calf with six legs and two heads they are all ready for a melancholy smile.

But by far the most successful feature of the Exhibition is the life-size plaster cast of Professor Sandow. I stood for an hour with the greatest enjoyment in a corner of the gallery just above it to watch its effect on them when they saw it. A party would come wandering along with absolutely blank, expressionless faces, staring at everything, understanding nothing. Suddenly one of the women turning sharply round the corner comes face to face with Sandow. At first she is frightened and covers her face with her hands, then with a shrill laugh she darts back, seizes her husband by the hand and drags him forward. He grins from ear to ear, and with eager cries they call the children and the rest of the party to look at the funny man. Soon they are all crowding round him, helpless with hilarity and deaf to the shouts of the indignant attendants, who run forward to hustle them on; but their faces, which were so sad and solemn when they entered the Museum, are covered with smiles and gaiety when they leave it. This Sandow statue is the most valuable thing in the whole place; it is gradually spreading the dawn of humour over Baroda. By this time next year they will have forgotten all about it and the new and delightful sensation will be repeated; but in the course of two or three centuries it will have begun to exercise an

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appreciable effect on the population, and the Maharaja of the period will be able to issue an order for the translation of *Box and Cox* and *Charley's Aunt* into the vernacular.

We have had another wedding: a young Brahmin friend of ours called Bhate has married a young widow, an unheard of and unprecedented event. It has caused a great sensation, and if they had not had the moral support of the Maharaja they would not have found a priest to marry them and would have been obliged to go to the Registrar, if such an official exists.

Bhate, who is a handsome, intelligent man, is in charge of one of the Districts, for though he is a Brahmin by caste he does not exercise any priestly functions. When he is in Baroda he often joins our tennis-parties and comes out with the Lapait Club. So Maharaja attended the wedding himself, and several Brahmins were present to tie the knot. Like Baba's wedding it was "fully choral"—native music inside the house, a military band outside, and the priests doing their best for any sportsman who had backed them for a place.

It recalled the dear old days at East Ham, when we used to christen batches of screaming infants to the strains of "Tis done, that New and Heavenly Birth" from the choir and of "Hold the Fort" from the Salvation Army band round the corner. When the ceremony was over and the bride had gone home

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we all adjourned to Raj Mahal, where breakfast was served in one of the large rooms lent by the Gaekwar to the bride's father, who was the giver of the feast, and who therefore did not partake of it himself, but walked about among his guests to attend to their wants and receive their congratulations. Everyone was enthusiastic, and several speeches were made full of flowery metaphors about breaking the fetters of superstition and making smooth the path of liberty.

Sampatrao and a few more ardent spirits gave a garden-party at nine o'clock the next morning in the Public Park in the bridegroom's honour, and he was there looking radiant and playing tennis with great vigour. The path of liberty has not yet made enough progress to enable Mrs. Bhate to be present. She is a very lucky girl, as instead of being condemned to lifelong seclusion and misery she may now enjoy a happy and useful life, thanks to the wise and enlightened policy of the Gaekwar, in which he is strongly supported by Her Highness and Indira.

Brilliant and gay are the colours with which the web of life in India is woven, but through them all runs a dark thread of tragedy and sorrow. It is wisely hidden away as far as possible, but during the last month it has been only too much in evidence. Miss Clarke, who spent Christmas with us here, keenly alive to all the intellectual and physical joys of life, has fallen a victim to a brain fever. She was much

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beloved by the native population and her loss has been keenly felt by the whole community. The vernacular papers are full of lamentation at her loss, and although it is contrary to etiquette for the Gaekwar to mourn for anyone, even for members of his own family, he has been deeply affected by her untimely death.

In Southern India great sympathy is felt for the Governor of Madras and Lady Lawley, whose son was found lying with his neck broken in one of the ravines among the downs at Ooty, where two months ago we used to follow the hounds together.

Another very nice man, Captain Dawes, whom we met at Bangalore, has just been drowned in the Cauvery River after saving the life of a coolie who had fallen into the water among the rapids, an act of self-sacrifice all the more heroic as he leaves behind him a charming wife and two dear little boys. It ought to do much to strengthen the ties of mutual esteem and devotion which bind native and Englishman together.

But what has affected me most of all is the death of dear Studdy, who was fatally injured while playing polo at Poona. He was the man who was so awfully kind to me at Ooty and entertained me so hospitably at the Coonoor Club. It seems too terribly sad to be true; for not only was he a splendid soldier and a capital sportsman, the most popular man in his regiment and beloved by all who knew him, but he

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was engaged to be married to one of the sweetest girls in India. To see them together was to understand what happiness may be, and it is dreadful to think that now for her, at least, it has all been changed to the most bitter sorrow.

Truly the ways of Providence are inscrutable. So many useless people who would never be missed go on cumbering the ground, while those who are a credit to their race and a benefit to mankind are taken away. All that we can do is to try to believe that those whom the gods love die young, and that some day we shall understand. But when I hear of the death of a man like that it makes me feel almost ashamed to go on living. What a glorious profession the army is! You always know exactly what you have to do, which is so much in life; and you have the chance of laying down your life for your ideal, which is the only desirable form of death. The same opportunity for obedience and renunciation is given to one in the Church, but it needs a great soul to grasp it.

I must stop or I shall make you as melancholy as I am feeling myself. To-morrow we leave Makarpura for Raj Mahal, the first of many partings which are now drawing so close. I try not to anticipate them, but these sad events have done much to reconcile me to the thought of leaving India, and it will be almost a relief when it is all over.

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IT is nearly a year ago since I promised to send you a description of some of the principal sights of Baroda, but so much has happened since then that they have been crowded out. During the last few days I have been visiting them again, curious to see if they would impress me as much as they did when I first saw them, when everything was strange and marvellous, and I am not a little pleased to find how really remarkable many of them are.

I must often have spoken of the Public Park and Zoological Gardens, of which any city in Europe might be proud. They were laid out with great skill by an Italian on either side of the winding river, and large though they are, they appear as large again. Green lawns bordered by groves of palms and feathery bamboos slope down to the river banks; the turf is bejewelled with bright tropical flowers, and monkeys freely disport themselves amongst the trees. Handsome stone bridges span the river in several places, and after dark large electric globes illuminate the principal avenues and the large circular garden which surrounds the bandstand.

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The band plays here on two evenings in the week, and we often drive down to hear it, and to have the opportunity of a chat with Indira, whose carriage is nearly always standing at some short distance away, an object of respectful curiosity to the groups of natives who are strolling about with their families and enjoying the selections of European and Indian music which are being played.

The beautiful artificial lakes are the home of birds from all parts of the globe, and their cages are placed amongst the luxuriant foliage all over the gardens. Some of the wild animals have large enclosures in which to roam, others have spacious cages, some of which are beautifully arranged, especially those of the crocodiles and the bears. The lions, tigers and leopards are under the charge of a native, who fearlessly enters their cages and makes them do whatever he pleases. Like the fascinating boy in Kipling's story, he has learnt their language and been made free of their haunts.

There are several handsome buildings in the Park, chief amongst them the Museum, which contains a great variety of interesting objects admirably arranged for educational purposes. Besides its art treasures, which are very considerable, it comprises natural history, chemistry, mineralogical and anatomical sections. Two long wings meet in a large central hall, from which a broad staircase leads to the spacious galleries which surround the building. It is in every way

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superior to the Museum which impressed me so much at Jaipur.

In the Art Gallery, which is also in the Park, are modern pictures and copies of some of the Old Masters. There are also many statues and casts from classical masterpieces, nearly all of which have been collected by the Maharaja during his European travels.

Facing the spacious lawn-tennis courts is a pavilion which was used by His Highness during the Coronation Durbar at Delhi. It was all made in sections in Baroda so that it might be quickly erected in the Gaekwar's camp, which was acknowledged to be the best there. On his return His Highness presented it to the citizens.

Most of the ground between the Park and the Railway Station is occupied by the College and its boarding houses, which are growing in number every year. At present there are about nine hundred students, and women are allowed to attend the lectures. The College itself is a fine building with a lofty dome under which is the lecture hall. The class-rooms are large and airy: those on the upper floor are for the students of the College, those below accommodate the Boys' High School.

The College works in connection with the University of Bombay. Boys begin their education very young and matriculate after six or seven years, while a B.A. degree takes another four years' work. Maharaja took me one day over some of the students' quarters,



THE COLLEGE, BARODA.



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where two live in one room simply furnished with beds, chairs and a few pegs on the wall. The cost is one rupee (1s. 4d.) a month for lodging and food comes to about fifteen rupees (£1) a month. For the course of teaching at the College the fee is five rupees a month. All castes and all religions work quite happily together, and there is hardly any friction. The only difficulty is that of preparing food for the different sects and castes, each of which has its meals cooked in a special way.

Across the great stone bridge over the river are two large hospitals, one for civil the other for military cases, both of them model institutions, large, airy and well-arranged, with operating-rooms and laboratories containing all the latest modern inventions, including an X-ray apparatus.

In a healthy situation on the outskirts of the town rise the clean, whitewashed walls of the Central Gaol. In the middle is the Governor's house, with a high tower above it commanding every part of the enclosure, and radiating from it are the cells in which the prisoners are confined, all on the ground floor, with plenty of light and air.

Each man has his own room with a bed in it, and is occupied with some useful craft which will enable him to make an honest living when he returns to the outside world, and there are larger rooms in which those convicted of minor offences work together. There are a few convicts with life-sentences, but not

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many; one of them was pointed out to us, a desperate fellow who has contrived to escape on several occasions—not an easy thing to do, as the high walls surrounding the prison are constantly patrolled by warders who live in towers at the four corners. Each time he was easily recaptured a few weeks after his escape in the old haunts, to which he had returned. He seemed quite happy and absorbed in his work, and paid no attention to us.

The State School for Girls is pleasantly situated on the banks of the large tank just outside the city walls. Here we saw children of five years old and upwards studying subjects which ranged from Kindergarten work to algebra. One or two were married, but as a rule they leave before this happens. Early marriages interfere fatally with the education of women, and are in consequence greatly deprecated by the Maharaja, who has raised the marriage age of girls to twelve years.

As in the College, all castes and creeds meet and learn together quite amicably. The Technical School, where various handicrafts are taught, is a particular hobby of the Gaekwar, who is anxiously striving to revive native industries. It is well organized, and every facility is given to acquire thorough knowledge in each branch of technical study.

On the opposite bank of the tank rises the stately pile of the Courts of Justice, the smaller courts being grouped round a large and lofty hall, in which there

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is a beautiful marble statue of the Maharaja's first wife, by whose munificence the building was erected. The Judges of the High Court are all exceptionally able men, and the administration of justice in Baroda is conducted with the same solemnity and impartiality as with ourselves.

Just outside is a pleasant garden planted with shady trees where the band plays for two or three hours every Saturday evening, to the great delight of the native population. So that on three days in the week the Maharaja foregoes the pleasure of hearing his own private orchestra in order that his subjects may have the benefit of it.

Another admirable institution is the State Bank, which the Gaekwar has recently established, with a directorate composed entirely of Indians. It is an important factor in the industrial development of Baroda, where the economic utility of banking on modern lines has hitherto been little recognized.

The Old Palace, where the Gaekwar lived during his minority while Raj Mahal was being built, is in the very heart of the city. It is a large, picturesque building of wood, with steep staircases and long, rambling galleries. The principal portion of it contains the Public Library, another part serves as a guard-house, and certain rooms are used as a school for very small children.

Behind it rises the stately pile of the Nazarbag Palace, surrounded by a beautiful garden. It is

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sometimes used for entertaining the Maharajas of other States, but it is chiefly interesting as housing the Gaekwar's famous collection of jewels, which are worth many millions of pounds. Properly displayed under glass cases in a fine gallery, they would attract every visitor who comes to India; but the natural conservatism of the native mind is at no time more in evidence than when any form of wealth, and especially jewels, is concerned. They are hoarded away in strong rooms and safes and only produced when a special order has been signed by the Maharaja and several Heads of Departments, so that it is not at all an easy matter to get a sight of them. They are then brought all mixed together on large trays, which are utterly confusing to a stranger, but as familiar to the army of clerks who spy upon one another with watchful, eager eyes as the Catechism is to me. They were shown to me by Sampatrao, who caressed them with loving fingers, as a lover fondles his mistress' hair, and with the mysterious smile which you always see on the face of a native when he is handling money or its equivalent.

The finest thing in the whole collection is the Pearl Necklace, said to be unrivalled among the world's jewels, and valued at fifty lacs (£500,000). The big Diamond Necklace, which is worth thirty-five lacs, contains the ninth largest diamond in the world, the Star of the South, which was originally part of the Koh-i-Noor. There is in the same neck-

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lace another stone, which is much finer even than this, although it is not so large. There is also a black pearl of great price, and an earring composed of the three finest pearls in the world.

Several beautiful diamond aigrettes for the turban are set on springs, so that the least movement causes them to glitter, and many of the pendants are very handsome. There are, of course, hundreds of other things, some of which are not so valuable as they look, being merely diamond shavings to form the numerous rings with which Rajas in the old days loved to cover every finger and toe. Blue stones are conspicuous by their absence, as they are not considered at all auspicious. These are all State jewels, handed down from generation to generation, and preserved in their traditional settings. The Gaekwar's private collection may not be so intrinsically valuable, but is far more effective on account of the more modern way in which the various pieces are set, though even then there is still room for improvement.

When he saw that I was beginning to weary of this display of wealth beyond the dreams of avarice, Sampatrao showed me an extraordinary piece of work which he had left as a *bonne bouche* till the end. Four great squares, each as large as a fair-sized carpet, were hung on the walls, apparently of tapestry. Closer inspection showed that they consisted entirely of jewels—pearls, emeralds, rubies, diamonds and so on—arranged on a ground of rich silk to form a

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design like that of some brightly-coloured piece of needlework. They were designed as a canopy for the Tomb of the Prophet at Medina by the order of Maharaja Khande Rao Gaekwar, who, although a Hindu, was a great admirer of Mohammedans. Just before the gift was sent out of the country the Maharaja opportunely died, and his successors did not feel bound to carry out his wishes. The value of the canopy itself is inconsiderable compared with that of the four cones of solid gold covered with hundreds of diamonds of the finest water which crown the posts supporting the four corners.

We wandered for some time through the vast cellars beneath the palace, which are filled with cupboards crammed with the ancient gold and silver vessels and ornaments belonging to former Maharajas. They form an inexhaustible supply of wealth on which the Gaekwar can draw when he is in the mood for a little more household plate. They are just popped into the melting-pot and sent to London, from which they return in a few months in the form of a new dinner-service, dressing-case, or whatever it may be.

Across the road is the antiquated mud building in which are kept the guns, two of gold and two of silver, which were cast to fire the salute when King Edward visited Baroda during his Indian tour. They are regarded as sacred by the natives; a small guard

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is always stationed near with a few priests in attendance, and flowers and incense are offered to them every day.

Each gun weighs 280 lbs. and the carriages, ramrods and other instruments used for artillery are all of the same precious metal as the gun. Each is drawn by two milk-white bullocks, whose stables are on one side of the courtyard, and on the other is the storehouse for their magnificent harness and trappings, including hundreds of little gold and silver bells, which tinkle gaily as they move along in State processions, the whole turn-out, with the guards in their splendid uniforms, forming a very pretty spectacle.

But for sheer barbaric magnificence and splendour we must go on to the Elephant Stables. Here round a vast enclosure thirty of the lordly beasts are stabled, each in his spacious stall, quiet enough except for the restless movement of shuffling feet, flapping ears and waving trunks, with which they cram great bundles of hay into their mouths or send it flying in a shower over their backs. At the word of command they raise their trunks into the air and the courtyard echoes with their loud trumpeting.

One very old beast takes life very quietly now that eighty summers have passed over his head, but most of the others have their favourite trick, which they seem quite pleased to show for your benefit. One smokes a pipe, a great hubble-bubble, with evident enjoyment—it is a treat which he does not get every

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day ; another goes through dumb-bell exercises and fences with his *mahout*, each of them carrying a shield and a wooden sword ; a third produces weird music from a mouth-organ and dances heavily about to the sound, making us laugh very much.

At the back is a large building in which all the elephants' furniture is stored. Oh, how I wish you could see it ! First there are the gold and silver howdahs and saddles of all shapes and sizes ; then huge cupboards full of the splendid hangings of cloth of gold which reach to their feet, the heavy gold anklets and tusk rings, the great golden bells which ring melodiously as they move along.

The golden *Ambari*, or throne, is so heavy that it takes two dozen men to lift it on to the elephant's back, yet he rises without an effort as though it were a feather bed. Still the strain of carrying it for some hours in the hot sun is great, and he is fed for a week beforehand on sugar-cane and other nourishing dainties, with a pint of sherry wine to cheer him when he gets home again. The largest elephant with the throne on his back and all his finery on is worth about £200,000 as he stands, so you may imagine what a grand sight the whole thirty of them must be when they are all out together.

Near the stables is a large meadow, in which the *must* elephants are securely fastened to trees. Every elephant has these periodical fits of madness, during which he is very dangerous. There are several signs



THE GOLDEN AMBARI.



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by which the keepers know when one is coming on, chiefly a gummy trickling behind the ear.

The other day when we were there seven of them were on the sick list. One of these was quiet enough and was even rubbing his trunk against the nose of an old donkey who had made friends with him ; but the others were throwing about great clouds of straw and dust, and two of them were very fierce indeed, straining every muscle to break loose from their fetters and attack us, and kicking up the ground all round them for stones to hurl at us, and it was advisable to keep well out of range, as an elephant can throw very straight.

Most of these sights I had the pleasure of showing to Orange, who was up with me at New College. He is now Director-General of Education in India and has been here for a few days on an official visit. It was delightful to see him again and to hear about many Oxford friends whom I had lost sight of. It was also extremely interesting to hear some of his discussions with the Maharaja on educational subjects. Orange was much struck with the Gaekwar's energetic personality and the greatness of his mind.

What a pity it is that I have such a small mind ! The Gaekwar has given me such an unique opportunity for studying native life, customs and habits, and I have made little or no use of it. As I look back upon the past year, it seems to be full of eating, drinking, sleeping and amusement. One sees

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and laughs at so many little things, while the big things which ought to excite admiration pass by unnoticed.

For instance, if you were to ask me how an educated native speaks English, I should think at once of all the little mistakes he makes, and tell you that he says "Na" when he should say "No," that he invariably uses "one" instead of the indefinite article ("His Highness has been pleased to give me one elephant," says Sampatrao with great complacency); if invitations are being issued for some function, he will tell you that you are "called" to it; he will say that he has "marked" that you smoke a great many cigarettes, and ask you where you "stay" in England when he wants to know where you live. For all our little interrogative sentences, "Have you?" "Did he?" "Really?" "Oh!" he has substituted, "Is it?" of which you get very tired, though not so tired as you get of "probably" and "and all that" with which he tries to conceal the lack of variety in his sentences. And yet if I could speak and write Mahratti as well as he speaks and writes English, I should count myself a good scholar. And he must know many other languages also, for the Gaekwar rules a conquered race whose speech is not his speech. At the Court Mahratti is spoken; in the city, Gujeratti.

Not the least difficult of the Maharaja's tasks is that of treating all his subjects with impartiality, but

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he carries it out admirably, and posts and offices in State and Court are open to all alike, without respect of race or creed. If the Mahratta predominates, it is because of his superior ability and energy.

We are now more energetic than ever. Shivajirao has fitted up the large room at the top of the palace beneath the central dome as a gymnasium; the floor is covered with a deep layer of earth and sand, and we meet there every morning as soon as we get up for a wrestling match under the instruction of two enormous men, who are the best wrestlers in Baroda.

When Shivajirao has disposed of me, he lets me play with Indian clubs while he tackles these giants, and though he is not yet a match for them, he shows great promise in this national sport and is becoming the despair of his London tailor, who cannot keep pace with his increasing measurements. When the Gaekwar is in India he is content with clothes made in Bombay; but they are not good enough for the younger generation, in spite of the difficulties of reconciling fit with fashion.

Dharyashil has lately been writing rather pathetic letters from Eastbourne; he has just gone as a boarder to the College and is feeling homesick. He says that he is doing no good and is only wasting his father's money. "Please send me," he writes, "a tiger-skin for the dormitory, as you know the boys don't have any carpets; also some Indian sweets as soon as you can, as I want them rather badly. When you

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receive this letter you will be in the room next to your dressing-room. All that part of the palace comes clearly before my eyes. If only it were possible to fly there and back in a few seconds, I should do so at every spare moment ; but it all seems quite hopeless."

Maharaja laughs and says that he is all right, but Maharani is quite concerned about him and is making a special hamper of cakes and sweatmeats, which I am to take with me when I go. He is very fond of a salt, brittle kind of biscuit which an English boy would reject indignantly.

He ought to be happy enough, as he plays cricket, football and racquets, blows a bugle in the Cadet Corps and rides ["But oh!" he said last winter, "it is too cold for riding."]; yet I daresay there are many moments when his blood clamours for the brilliant sunshine and the aromatic airs of his native land. The sights, the sounds, the scents of India are very haunting, and at the sunset hour the "smell of a field which the Lord hath blessed" takes possession of you and makes you its own for ever. I should not care to live always in India, but the thought of leaving her makes the whole heart sick. "If only it were possible to fly there and back in a few seconds!"

Well! it is all over. The "time of my life" has come to an end, and it would be too dreadful if I had not you waiting to welcome me back home. We spent the last evening in Maharani's drawing-

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room, and they were all so sweet and good and kind that it made the parting very hard.

The Gaekwar passed his arm through mine and led me away, and before we passed the screen I turned round for one last look. Mother and daughter were standing together hand in hand, two gracious figures symbolizing all the beauty and wealth and charm of India—all the goodness I have received from her, all the love I bear her. Then they were gone.

The Maharaja took two or three turns with me up and down the corridor where we had so often walked together; but it was too painful, and with a warm pressure of the hand he walked quickly away to his rooms. A lot of people were waiting down below in the hall, the three Aides, Dr. Jadhav and Hingujirao, Fardesai, Morenas, Mungal Khan, and even the distressful billiard-marker, salaaming nervously behind a pillar, all with beaming faces and kind words. Shivajirao was waiting with the wagonette to drive me to the station, a last meet of the Lapait Club—members present: Kaka, Pilajirao, Nimbalker, Bhate and Jagdali Junior.

For the last time we bowled along the broad avenues of the palace compound, through the city sleeping peacefully in the moonlight, over the silent waters of the river and through the deserted glades of the Public Park.

At the station a faithful few had assembled, among them the native verger of the English Church,

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with a wreath of orange-blossoms to hang round my neck. At the door of my saloon stood the smiling Sanka, very happy because Shivajirao Maharaja had given him leave to go with me to Bombay and see me safely on board the *India*.

The last farewells were said, and as we moved slowly away someone struck up the Baroda National Anthem, and when I could no longer see the faces of my friends, I could still hear their strong, clear voices, joining in the melody which has been my parting gift to the country which has treated me with such splendid hospitality, and which I love so well :

Long may the Gaekwar reign,
And peace and plenty bless him.
Long may His Highness reign,
And ne'er a foe distress him.
May God protect his land,
And grant him with bounteous hand
Long life and health
And joy and wealth.
Long may the Gaekwar reign !

To all of which I say from a full heart, "So mote it be."

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